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Hints on Good Taste in Gardening

BY

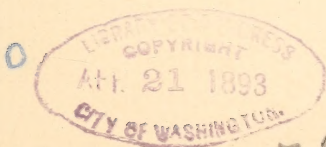
MRS. SCHUYLER VAN RENSSELAER

"A man shall ever see, that, when ages grow to
civility and elegancy, men come to build
stately sooner than to garden finely; as if
gardening were the greater perfection."

—BACON

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TO
THE FRIENDS IN BROOKLINE
WHO TAUGHT ME TO CARE FOR THE
ART
WHICH STANDS NEAREST TO
NATURE.

PREFACE

I HOPE that no one will open my little book thinking that its title means "Every Man His Own Landscape Gardener." A book justifying this name could never be written, and none conceived in its spirit ought ever to be attempted. Practical treatises for artists' and students' use are, of course, another matter; but it was not for me to try to add to the number of these. All I have wished to do is to say a friendly word to the public on behalf of gardening as an art—not attempting to speak of all its phases and problems, or to speak exhaustively of any among them, but simply to plead the cause of good taste by showing why this art should be practised and judged as are arts of other kinds.

It is the one which has produced the most remarkable artist yet born in America; and this is reason enough why all

Preface

Mr. Olmsted's fellow-countrymen ought to try to understand its aims and methods. But they ought also to try to understand them in the interests of self-protection; for to-day the art of gardening is practised much more often than any other, in ignorant, impulsive ways, by people who never stop to think that it is an art at all.

M. G. VAN RENSSELAER.

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* * * The author is indebted to the editors of *Garden and Forest* for permission to recast much material which first appeared in their journal.

I

The Art of Gardening

“Laying out grounds may be considered a liberal art, in some sort like poetry and painting.”

—*Wordsworth.*

“It seemed to my friend that the creation of a landscape-garden offered to the proper muse the most magnificent of opportunities. Here indeed was the fairest field for the display of the imagination, in the endless combining of forms of novel beauty.”

—*Poe.*

I



THE Arts of Design are usually named as three: architecture, sculpture, and painting. It is the popular belief that a man who practises one of these is an artist, and that other men who work with forms and colors are at the best but artisans. Yet there is a fourth Art of Design which well deserves to rank with them, for it demands quite as much in the way of æsthetic feeling, creative power, and executive skill. This is the art which creates beautiful compositions upon the surface of the ground.

The mere statement of its purpose should show that it is truly an art. The effort to produce organic beauty is what makes a man an artist; neither the production of a merely useful organism nor of a beautiful isolated detail can suffice; he must compose a beautiful whole with a number of related parts. Therefore, while he who raises useful crops

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is an agriculturalist, and he who grows plants for their individual charms is a horticulturalist, and he who constructs solid roads is an engineer, the man who uses ground and plants, roads and paths, and water and accessory buildings, with an eye to organic beauty of effect, is—or ought to be—an artist.

All the Arts of Design are thus akin in general character and purpose. But they differ from each other in many ways, and in studying the peculiarities of gardening art we find some reasons why its affinity with its sisters is so commonly ignored.

One difference is that it uses the same materials as Nature herself. In what is called the “naturalistic” style of gardening it uses them to produce many effects which, under favoring conditions, Nature might have produced without man’s aid. Then, the better the result, the less likely it is to be recognized as an artificial, an artistic, result; the more perfectly the artist attains his end, the more likely we are to forget that he has been at work.

I dare say there are many persons who

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do not know that a large portion of Central Park was created by Mr. Olmsted and his associates, in almost as literal a sense as any painter ever created a pictured landscape ; who do not remember the dismal, barren, treeless, half-rocky, and half-swampy waste which, less than forty years ago, occupied all the tracts below the reservoir ; who fancy that Nature made them beautiful with meadows, ponds, trees, and shrubs, with woodland passages, and verdurous cliffs and hollows ; who think that all man has done has been to lay out the roads and paths, and build the terraces, bridges, and shelters. If they will read any contemporary description of the quondam aspect of these tracts, now so natural-looking in their beauty, and will then study the Park to-day and consider what difficulties must have attended the process which made it lovely to the eyes and convenient for the feet and wheels of crowding thousands, they may gain some idea of what landscape-gardening means ; they may understand why we who have studied it even from the outside rank it quite as high as any other art.

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In naturalistic work such as this, I say, we may carelessly admire the result while forgetting that an artist wrought it. But, on the other hand, when an artist has essayed the formal, "architectural" style of gardening, and has disposed Nature's materials in frankly non-natural ways, his activity will be recognized, but, in our country at least, few will stop to consider whether it has been artistic or not. A more or less intelligent love for natural beauty is very common with us while good judgment in art is very rare. Therefore—and especially as we are unaccustomed to thinking of art out-of-doors at all—we do not understand that in certain situations a formal design may be the best. Seeing that it is not Nature's work, or like Nature's work, we condemn it as a wilful misuse of good natural material. We recognize man's product, but we do not appreciate any beauty that it may possess.

Again, gardening-art differs from all others in the unstable character of its results. When surfaces are modelled and plants arranged, Nature and the artist must still work a long time together before the

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true picture appears ; and when once it has revealed itself, day to day attention will be forever needed to preserve it from the altering effects of time. It is easy to imagine, therefore, how often neglect or interference must work havoc with the best intentions, how often the passage of years must destroy or travesty the best results.

Still another thing which prevents popular recognition of this art is our lack of clearly understood terms with which to speak about it. "Gardens" once meant pleasure-grounds of every kind, and "gardener" then had an adequately artistic sound. But as the meaning of the first term was gradually specialized, so the other gradually came to denote a mere grower of plants. "Landscape-gardener" was a title invented by the artists of the eighteenth century to mark the new tendency which they represented—the search for "natural" as opposed to "formal" beauty ; and it seemed to them to need an apology as savoring, perhaps, of grandiloquence or conceit. But as taste declined in England, this title was assumed by men who had not the

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slightest right, judged either by their aims or by their results, to be considered artists ; and to-day it is fallen into such disrepute that it is often replaced by "landscape-architect." French usage supports this term, and it is in many respects a good one. But its derivative, "landscape-architecture," is unsatisfactory ; and so, on the other hand, is "landscape-artist," although "landscape-art" is a good general term. Perhaps the best we can do is to keep to "landscape-gardener," trying to remember that it ought always to mean an artist and an artist only, but that this artist is not always called upon to design landscapes, either large or small, or even naturalistic gardens.

The landscape-gardener, when his title is most appropriate, stands with the sculptor and the painter, in contrast to the architect, in that he takes his inspiration directly from Nature, working after the schemes and from the models which she supplies. But in some respects he stands quite alone. The painter works with actual colors, but with mere illusions of form, and the sculptor creates

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forms but uses colors, if at all, in conventional and subordinate ways ; but the landscape-gardener depends upon color and form in equal measure, and can never dispense with the one or the other. Then again, he takes from Nature not only his models but his materials and methods. His colors are those of her own palette, his clays and marbles are her rocks and soils, and his technical processes are the same that she employs. He does not show her possibilities of beauty as in a mirror of his own inventing. He helps her in her actual efforts to realize them—he works in and for and with her.

This fact limits and hampers him in certain ways ; but, under fortunate conditions, it allows him to achieve what no other artist can — perfection. “The sculptor or the painter,” writes a recent critic, “observes defects in the single model ; he notices in many models scattered excellences. . . . To correct those defects, to re-unite those excellences, becomes his aim. He cannot rival Nature by producing anything exactly like her work, but he can create something which shall show what Nature strives after.

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. . . The mind of man comprehends her effort and, though the skill of man cannot compete with her in the production of particulars, man is able by art to anticipate her desires, and to exhibit an image of what she was intending." But the landscape-gardener is Nature's rival, does create things like her own, can compete with her in perfect workmanship, for she herself works with him while he is re-uniting her scattered excellences and obliterating her defects. What he cannot do she does for him, from the building of mountains and the spreading of skies to the perfecting of those "particulars" which turn the keenest chisel and blunt the subtlest brush—to the curling of a fern-frond and the veining of a rose. Of course she will not everywhere do everything. If part of her work is in completing man's, part is in preparing for it, and he must respect the canvas and frame which she furnishes for his picture, the general scheme which she prescribes. He cannot ask her to build him mountains in a plain, to change a hill-side rivulet to a river, or to make tropical trees grow under northern skies. But

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he can always persuade her to produce beauty of some sort, if he is wise enough to know for what sort he should ask.

This, of course, is true only in a theoretic sense. Theoretically, there is no spot on earth an artist could not beautify. But some spots would demand a life of antediluvian length, and dollars as plentiful as the sands by the sea. Practically, the landscape-gardener, perhaps more than any other artist, is limited by questions of time and money. And his partnership with Nature limits him as regards not only the sort, but the degree of beauty which he can achieve. Nature may suggest the same sort in two places, but if she prepares lavishly for it in the one spot and parsimoniously in the other, the best skill in the world may not be able to succeed as well here as there. Yet, I say, the landscape-gardener can always count upon that perfection in details which painter and sculptor never get ; and his general effects as well as his details have the great advantage of being alive. A great advantage indeed, for it means many beautiful results in every piece of work instead of

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merely one, and perpetual variation in each of the many. His aim is, in general, the same as that of the landscape-painter, who knows that the most potent factors in Nature's beauty are light and atmosphere. No things in the world, not even the color and texture of the human skin, are so difficult to simulate, so impossible to imitate in paint as these. But to the landscape-gardener's pictures Nature freely supplies them, and not only in the one phase for which a painter strives, but in a thousand, changing them with each day of the year and each hour of the day. And with the passing days and seasons she changes also his terrestrial effects, so that no part of his work is twice the same although, if rightly wrought, it is always beautiful.

But does not this partnership with Nature deprive the artist of the chance for self-expression? Art, after all, is not imitation but interpretation; and interpretation implies the exercise of choice and inventiveness, the revelation of personal thought. No artist can copy Nature, and if he could his

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work would not be worth while. Its only value would be historical, not artistic ; it would be prized only as the permanent record of a perishable fact. To make his result worth while as art, he must put into it a portion of himself.

If the landscape-gardener were indeed denied the chance to do this he could not be more than a skilful artisan. But he is not denied it. In fact, he cannot escape if he would from the necessity for self-expression. It is not truer to say of him than of the painter or the sculptor that he copies Nature. Although they work merely with their eyes upon Nature, and he works in and with her, his aim is the same as theirs—to reunite her scattered excellences. Theoretically he could copy her in a very exact sense of the word ; but practically he can copy little more than her minor details and her exquisite finish of execution. Composition of one sort or another is the chief thing in art, and the landscape-gardener's compositions must be his own. Through them he must express his own ideals. If he is Nature's pupil he is also her master.

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“Nature,” writes Aristotle, “has the will but not the power to realize perfection.” Turn the phrase the other way and it is quite as true: she has the power but not the will. In either reading it means that man can aid and supplement her work. The landscape-gardener can bend her will in many ways to his own, although he must have learned from her how to do it. He cannot achieve things to which her power is unequal, but he can liberate, assist, and direct that power. He could even remove her mountains if the result were worth the effort; and he can blot them out of his landscape by the simplest of devices—by planting a clump of trees and shrubs which she will grow for him as cheerfully as though she herself had sown their seeds. He cannot make great rivers; but he can make lakes from rivulets and cause water to dominate in a view which Nature had spread with green grass. He can even teach her to create exquisite details scarcely hinted at in her unassisted products. All “florists’ roses,” for example, are not beautiful; but there are many in which Nature herself may

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grudge man's skill its major share. In short, the landscape-gardener's task is to produce beautiful pictures. Nature supplies him with his materials; always giving him vitality, light, atmosphere, color, and details, and often lovely or imposing forms in the conformation of the soil; and she will see to the thorough finishing of his design. But the design is the main thing, and the design must be of his own conceiving.

It is easy to see that this is true when formal, "architectural" garden-designing is in question. But it is just as true of naturalistic landscape-work. Nature seldom shows a large composition which an artist would wish to reproduce; and if by chance she does, it is impossible for him to reproduce it. Practical difficulties hedge him narrowly in, and appropriateness controls his efforts even more imperiously than those of other artists. His aim is never purely ideal; he can never think of beauty, or even of fitness, in the abstract. He may practise with abstract problems on paper, but with each piece of his actual work Nature says to him: "Here in this spot I have drawn a

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rough outline which it is for you to make into a picture. In many other spots I have shown you scattered beauties of a thousand kinds. It is for you to decide which you can bring into your work, and to discover how they may be fused into a whole which shall look as beautiful, as right, as though I had created it myself." Appropriateness must be the touchstone for particular features as for general effects. The artist's memory may be stored with endless beauties—with innumerable "bits" of composition and good ideas for foregrounds, middle distances, and backgrounds, and with exhaustless materials in the way of trees and shrubs and flowers. But not one of these can be used until he has considered whether it will be theoretically appropriate in this part of the world, in a scheme of this special sort, and whether, if it is, practical considerations will permit its use.

Indeed, the true process for landscape-work is more imaginative than this. The true artist will not go about with a store of ready-made features and effects in his mind, and strive to fit some of them into the task

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of the moment as best he may. He will conceive his general idea in deference to the local commands of Nature; develop his general scheme as artistic fitness counsels; discover the special features which are needed to complete it (considering which Nature will permit among those he might desire); and then, half unconsciously perhaps, search for memories of natural results which may teach him how to achieve his own. In educating himself he will have tried less to remember definitely this and that particular natural result than to understand how Nature goes to work to produce beautiful results. He will have tried to permeate himself with her spirit, to comprehend her aims, to learn what she means by variety in unity, by effective simplicity, by harmonious contrasts, by fitness of feature and detail, by beauty of line and color, by distinctness of expression — in a word, by composition. He will have tried to train his memory for general rather than for particular truths, and chiefly to purify his taste and stimulate his imagination; for he will have known that while, in some ways, he is Nature's favorite

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pupil, in others she treats him more parsimoniously than the rest. She gives him a superabundance of models by the study of which he may make himself an artist ; but when, as an artist, he is actually at work, she will never give him one pattern which, part by part, can guide his efforts. When we read of painters, we marvel most, not at the modern "realist" working inch by inch from the living form, but at Michael Angelo on his lonely scaffold, filling his ceiling with forms more powerful and superb than Nature's—no guides at hand but his memory of the very different forms he had studied from life, and his own creative thought. Yet something like this is what the landscape-gardener must do every time he starts a piece of work. Certainly not each of his tasks is as difficult as a Sistine ceiling, but each, whether small or great, must be approached from an imaginative standpoint.

There is another point to be noted. When we speak of the artist as taught and inspired by "natural" scenes, we are apt

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to mean all those which have not been modified by the conscious action of art. We recognize a park-landscape as non-natural; but those rural landscapes in cultivated countries from which the designer of a park draws his best lessons, are also non-natural. "If, in the idea of a natural state," says an old English writer, "we included ground and wood and water, no spot in this island can be said to be in a state of nature. . . . Wherever cultivation has set its foot—wherever the plough and spade have laid fallow the soil—nature is become extinct."

Extinct is, of course, too strong a word if we take it in its full significance. But it is not too strong if we understand it as meaning those things which are most important to the landscape-gardener; the compositions, the broad pictures, of Nature have been wiped out in all thickly settled countries. The effects we see may not be artistic effects, may not have resulted from a conscious effort after beauty; but they are none the less artificial. They do not show us what Nature wants to do or can do, but

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what man and Nature have chanced to do together. When English artists became dissatisfied with the formal, architectural gardening of the seventeenth century, they fondly fancied they were learning from Nature how to produce those aspects of rural freedom, of idyllic repose, of seemingly unstudied grace and charm which were their new desire. But in reality they were learning from the face of a country which for centuries had been carefully moulded, tended, and put to use by man. In some of its parts the effects of man's presence were comparatively inconspicuous. But of most parts it could be said that for ages not a stream or tree or blade of grass had existed except in answer to his efforts, or, at least, in consequence of his permission; and it was these parts, and not the wilder ones, which gave most assistance to the landscape-gardener.

Take, for example, the lawn, which is so essential a feature of almost every naturalistic gardening design. It is not true, as often has been said, that Nature never suggests a lawn. But it is true that she did

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not suggest it to those English gardeners who developed it so beautifully. They were inspired by the artificially formed meadow-lands and forest-glades of the England of their time.

Yet all the semi-natural, semi-artificial beauty of England would not have taught them how to make beautiful parks and gardens had they not been taught by their own imagination too. What they wanted to create was landscapes which should charm from all points of view, bear close as well as distant inspection, and be free from all inharmonious details ; and, moreover, landscapes which should fitly surround the homes of men and accommodate their very various needs and pleasures. Such landscapes we never find in Nature, not even in cultivated, semi-artificial Nature. That is, while we can imagine a natural spot which would be an appropriate setting for a hunter's lodge or a hermit's cell, we can fancy none which would fittingly encircle a palace, a mansion, or even a modest home for a man with civilized habits and tastes. Every step in civilization is a step away from that wild estate

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which alone is truly Nature ; and the further away we get from it the more imagination is needed to bring the elements of use and beauty which Nature still supplies into harmony with those which man has developed.

7 The simplest house in the most rural situation needs at least that a path shall be carried to its door ; and to do as much as cut a path in the most pleasing possible way needs a certain amount of imagination, of art. How much more, then, is imagination needed in such a task as the laying-out of a great estate, where subordinate buildings must be grouped around the chief one, and all must be accommodated to the unalterable main natural features of the scene ; where a hundred minor natural features must be harmoniously disposed ; where convenient courses for feet and wheels must be provided ; where gardens and orchards must be supplied, water must be made at once useful and ornamental, and every plant, whether large or small, must be beautiful in the sense of helping the beauty of the general effect ? The stronger the desire to make so artificial

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a composition look as though Nature might have designed it, the more intimate must be the artist's sympathy with her aims and processes, and the keener his eye for the special opportunities of the site she offers ; but, also, the greater must be his imaginative power, the firmer his grasp on the principles and processes of art.

II

Aims and Methods

“If the art of gardening is at last to turn back from her extravagances and rest with her other sisters, it is, above everything, necessary to have clearly before you what you require. . . . It is certainly tasteless and inconsistent to desire to encompass the world with a garden-wall, but very practicable and reasonable to make a garden . . . into a characteristic whole to the eye, heart, and understanding alike.”

—*Schiller.*

II



F, now, we ask when and where we need the Fine Art of Gardening, must not the answer be, Whenever and wherever we touch the surface of the ground and the plants it bears with a wish to produce an organized result that shall please the eye? The name we usually apply to it must not mislead us into thinking that this art is needed only for the creation of broad "landscape" effects. It is needed wherever we do more than grow plants for the money we may save or gain by them. It does not matter whether we have in mind a great park or a small city square, a large estate or a modest door-yard: we must go about our work in an artistic spirit if we want a good result. Two trees and six shrubs, a scrap of lawn and a dozen flowering plants may form either a beautiful little picture or a huddled disarray of forms and colors.

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If they form a picture, it will give us the same sort of satisfaction that we get from a good landscape on canvas ; indeed, it will do more than this, for the living picture will reveal new beauties day by day with the changing seasons, hour by hour with the shifting shadows. But if they form an inharmonious, unorganized mass, they will please us only by the beauty of this detail and that ; and even their details will be intrinsically less delightful than had they formed part of an agreeable general effect. Ruskin defines a good composition as one in which every detail helps the general beauty of effect ; but it may also be defined, conversely, as one which brings out the highest beauty of each of its details.

A glance at any American town or summer-colony of villas shows how deficient we are in artistic feeling when we deal with natural objects. The surroundings of our homes have not improved as rapidly as the homes themselves. Even in these we are still far from a general average of excellence. But I think we are on the right road to

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reach it. We have learned certain architectural truths, and we respect them theoretically even though we may often err in their application. We do not expect to build a good house without an architect to help us; we do not expect him to begin without a clear idea of the kind of house we want—of the special site it must occupy, the special needs it must fulfil, the special tastes it must meet. We are not content if he designs it by throwing together a number of pretty features regardless of harmony in the result. Nor do we buy our furniture bit by bit as passing whims dictate, or pile it casually about in our rooms. At least there are not so many of us who do these things as there were twenty years ago, and we are all aware that they ought not to be done.

Yet they are just the things which almost everyone does outside his house. If he has “no taste for Nature” himself, he puts his grounds into the hands of a gardener, without inquiring whether he has any qualifications beyond a knowledge of how to make plants grow. And if he has such a taste

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himself, it means, in a great majority of cases, a mere love for being out-of-doors, for planting things, and for watching them develop. Or, at the most, it is apt to mean no more than a taste for Nature's individual products—a special love for trees, an interest in shrubs, a passion for flowers. The cases are very rare in which it means a taste at all analogous to what we understand by a taste for art; that is, an appreciation of organized beauty, a love for the charm of contrasting yet harmonizing lines and masses, colors, lights and shadows; a delight in intelligent design, in details subordinated to a coherent general effect. Yet it is only such a taste as this which means a real feeling for Nature's beauty, and which can make the surroundings of our homes really beautiful.

We have had some admirable landscape-gardeners in America; and one of them, Mr. Olmsted, is the greatest living master of his craft, if not the very greatest who has lived since gardening art has dealt with landscape-effects at all. Naturally these artists are more often asked to manage large problems than small ones. But as yet they are not

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asked often enough to manage even very important ones ; and when they are, their counsels are seldom rightly respected. They may be permitted to lay out a park or a country-place as they wish, but when once their backs are turned, how quick is park-commissioner or owner to retouch and spoil, or to neglect and likewise spoil their work ! How seldom does he ask himself what it was that his landscape-gardener really wanted to do, what was the general effect he wanted to produce, and then address himself to developing and preserving it ! We seldom see any park or country-place, great or small, of which we can say, There is everything here that the eye desires, there is nothing that it could wish away. Almost any proprietor would be surprised did we venture to criticise the view from his window upon the same principles that we should apply to a painting on his walls ; and yet, unless it will bear such criticism, it is not what he should have wished to make it.

Of course, only an experienced and capable artist is likely to arrange any extensive gardening scheme with success ; and even

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the smallest scheme is likely to be more successfully planned and more rapidly perfected under an artist's eye. Yet if his help is unattainable, there is no reason why the amateur should resignedly fall back upon haphazard ways of working. Any man can try to work in an artistic spirit, even if he cannot rival an artist's skill in execution. That is to say, no result made up of various elements (even if those elements be the very fewest in number) can be good which is not good as a whole; to make it good as a whole we must begin by having a clear idea of what sort of a whole we want; and to begin with such an idea is to work in an artistic spirit, no matter how well or poorly we succeed in giving it beautiful expression. The scheme is the main point—the scheme, and the will to stick to it and not be tempted by the beauty of individual things into frittering away or confusing its effect.

Is it needful to say that working in this spirit we should not only work to better eventual effect, but with greater pleasure at the moment? To have some appropriate and charming little picture in our minds

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which we want to realize ; to dispose our ground, and to choose and place our plants, with the requirements of this picture before us—this is to get the highest degree of pleasure from our planting. Nor can it be objected that, when the picture is once arranged, our work and pleasure are over unless it can be perpetually tampered with and disarranged. To the artist in gardening the mutability of Nature is often a heavy cross, since he knows that when his result is considered “ finished,” he must leave it to others who will permit it (even if they do not aid it) to transform itself into something very different. But the proprietor or gardener who is trying on a modest scale to emulate the artist, finds in this very mutability an assurance of the permanence of his pleasure. Day by day and year by year he can watch the development of his picture, guard against Nature’s disfiguring touches, welcome her happy accidents, and carefully correct and retouch the result himself while preserving its general integrity. And this work will surely be pleasant, for to the scientific satisfaction of the cultivator will be

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added that highest of all intellectual delights, the consciousness of being a creator in the field of art.

I do not like this use of the words "artist" and "amateur" into which I have been driven by our lack of clear descriptive terms. Rightly, an artist is anyone who produces good works of art, and no one else, and an amateur is an intelligent lover of art; and it is a pity that we must twist the words to mean professional and non-professional practitioners of art, irrespective of the merit of their results. I have seen work done by professional "artists" in gardening which disgraces alike the dignity of Nature and the dignity of art; and I have seen very artistic work done by men who have merely labored upon their own domains, and whose indisputable skill will never be at the public's service.

It has amused and yet distressed me to find that some of these artists-in-private do not know that they are artists at all, and that most of their friends are astonished if the name is given them. They sometimes

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think that they are simply “lovers of Nature.” They have chanced to learn their art, not in schools, or offices, or books, but face to face with the problem that Nature has set them, the materials that she has supplied, and the lessons that she and her worthy ministrants have explained in other places; and they do not realize that they have studied at her knee with an artist’s eye, and have used her brushes and chisels with an artist’s hand.

I visited not long ago the home of such a man. It is a large place, gradually turned into one by the union of two or three small places which, as first laid out, had no artistic relation to each other. Now it is the most beautiful suburban home I have ever seen. Its grounds have every artistic excellence—breadth, repose, simplicity, and fitness (these first of virtues in all works of gardening), harmony between part and part and between detail and detail, concentration of interest, variety in unity, stimulus for the imagination; and these excellences did not come by accident, for their names are perpetually on their creator’s lips.

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The principles of composition upon which he has worked in beautifying his grounds are the same as those upon which a good landscape-painter works, as regards perspective and composition, color, lights and darks, and light and shadow ; and from the outset he had just as keen a sense of the general impression he wished to produce, the sentiment he wished to convey ; and at each step just as true a knowledge of the right expedients for compassing his ends. His trees have been planted, cherished, or cut down as they have helped or hurt the general effect of his landscapes, each special landscape formed by his varied woods and lawns and shrubberies and glimpses of water being kept consistent with itself, harmonious with its neighbors, and yet individual in character. His flowers have been placed, not where they would look well when seen only close at hand, but where they would " tell " well in the broad pictures they adorn. A pond has been made just where a pond was needed to unite, yet, in a sense, divide, different landscape-passages ; and every foot of ground in its vicinity is perpetually consid-

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ered, not for itself alone, but for the water's reflections also—even a great group of poppies high up on a bank at some distance from the pond growing just there in order that a red stain may show on the bosom of the water, near the yellow stain made by great clumps of hardy azaleas. No flower is allowed to stand where its color would not harmonize with adjacent things, and none which is intrinsically ugly in color. And this careful artist takes as much pleasure in finding that the sky-line of his trees is beautiful against a midnight heaven, and that their masses group well under the rays of the setting sun, as though his work had been done on canvas.

I do not know how many of his visitors really appreciate the pictures he has thus created, but, I fancy, very few; and he himself was surprised to be told that the lover or art would be more likely to appreciate them than the "lover of Nature." He did not know that he was an artist; he thought he was only a lover of Nature himself. But all the years he has spent in studying his place, and the works of Nature and of men outside

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his place ; all his careful energy ; all his wide botanical knowledge and practical acquaintance with the needs of trees and shrubs and grass and flowers, would not have helped him to his beautiful results had he not had the vision of an artist.

This means that he had seen Nature with a particularly keen eye, had studied her details and effects with unwonted enthusiasm as well as knowledge, had loved best her most beautiful products, and had discovered, therefore, that the noblest of all beauties is organized beauty—beauty of general effect. Acting on this feeling, patiently and cautiously, yet boldly too, he has made of his domain a series of luxuriant pictures more perfect than any which Nature herself could paint. For, as I have said, no natural scene can fittingly surround the home of highly civilized people ; and, moreover, every natural scene is marked by certain accidental blemishes—by signs of death and decay at the very least—which detract from the purity, if not from the impressiveness, of its charm. Here, on the contrary, human comfort and convenience have been fully

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provided for in ways which do not detract from beauty ; and, while the eye asks nothing more, it can wish away no feature or detail from pictures as carefully tended as they have been carefully designed.

This country-place is an example of creative work in a very strict sense. Its beauty is almost altogether artificial. It does not even look natural to any trained eye ; it merely looks naturalistic ; and, in truth, none of its features, except in one outlying tract of woodland, stand and grow according to a scheme of Nature's devising. The soil has always been there, of course ; but for two hundred years it had been put to various human purposes ; its surface has now been a good deal altered, and over much the greater part of it everything it bears has been planted by man. So this place stands at one of the extremes of landscape-gardening art : it is an example of what, under certain conditions, the landscape - gardener ought to do.

But I have in mind another American country-place which is very beautiful too,

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and which stands at the other extreme: it is an example of what the landscape-gardener ought sometimes to leave undone. It has not been made beautiful, and appropriate for human use, by acts of creation but by acts of elimination and preservation. The pictures it presents have not been composed with materials brought from other spots or grown from planted seeds, but have been carved out of a wild landscape by a judicious use of the axe alone.

This place lies on the shores of Buzzard's Bay and covers some 1,500 acres. In this wind-swept and sandy region Nature grows, in very charming arrangements, a considerable assortment of beautiful plants; yet her nursery (as regards its larger products) seems very restricted if we compare it with those she has established in fertile inland districts. Of course this means that it is difficult even to cultivate here the majority of the plants upon which, in inland districts, an artist may depend for varied gardening effects; where plants do not grow with ease they are always likely to look out of place if man coaxes them to persevere; and this is doubly

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true of spots where Nature has contented herself with few species, for such spots have an unusually distinct character of their own, an unusually well-marked individuality.

In such spots what is an owner or his gardener likely to attempt? Most often to "make up," as he would say, for Nature's niggardliness—to supply the deficiencies of her limited nursery. He strives to reproduce, on a soil unfit for the purpose and amid inappropriate surroundings, the varied and luxuriant effect of the average inland country-place. And, as a consequence, he misses the chance to get a good result which would be characteristic of the country-side where he has chosen to make his home, and gets only a bad imitation of results proper to very different regions.

A true artist would go to work in quite another way. He would accept Nature's frame, outlines, and materials, and paint his pictures according to her local specifications. He would strive to re-unite her "scattered excellences," but not all of them, and not an assortment chosen at random—only such as she herself might here have brought harmo-

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niously together, and disengaged from encumbering details, were she able to make pleasure-grounds instead of wild landscapes merely. He would respect, preserve, heighten, accentuate, civilize, and yet poetize the natural character of the special site he had chosen, and thus would produce, not only a good work of art but one with a special, local, personal charm, inimitable anywhere else.

And this is just what has been done, by an artist-in-private, with the place I know on the shores of Buzzard's Bay. It lies very beautifully at the head of the bay, and its water-front, measured in and out along its little headlands and coves, is some six miles in length. When it came into its present owner's hands it was partly farm-land and partly thick second-growth forest, the woods fringing almost all the little beaches, and, after the lovely local manner, coming down to the very sand with a tangle of shrubs and vines. The house was already built. It is very ugly, and no attempt has been made to mitigate its ugliness by planting. But it fortunately stands on just the right spot, and when a better one replaces it, a few native

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shrubs set around its foundations will be all that is needed to complete an harmonious picture of what a northern seaside home should be.

On all this big estate no planting whatever has been done except the planting of useful crops in places where they are seen only by those who may seek them out ; and nowhere upon it does there stand a single tree or conspicuous shrub which a gardener would call a "fine specimen." Yet it is one of the most satisfying, one of the most artistic, country-places that I can call to mind. No artist would wish it otherwise. Any lover of art would know that it would be ruined by the least attempt at conventional gardening, the smallest importation of florists' plants. Thousands of trees have been cut down to form the many miles of road, and the roads are scientifically constructed. But their curves through the woods, or along the water's edge, are as natural-seeming as they are graceful ; and no hand is ever allowed to touch their borders except when the shrubs, which Nature grows here very lavishly, trespass in inconvenient

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ways upon the roadbed. Many fields which once were cultivated now lie, like lakes of tall grass and wild-flowers, encircled by arms of woodland. But very large clipped lawns have rightly been made around three sides of the house, as it stands on its little promontory, so that the magnificent encircling stretch of sea and distant shore may make its due impression of broad and peaceful beauty.

A few years ago the expanse now covered by these lawns was a tangled mass of stones, bushes, and small trees, with here and there a few trees of larger growth. The labor of clearing was great; but the natural slopes were fine, and, as I have said, further labor in the way of planting was wisely shunned. In well-chosen positions some groups of oaks and pines and tupelos were left where Nature had put them, and as the winds of many winters had twisted and torn them; and, seen against the background of blue sea, they are more delightful than the best gardeners' specimens could be. They are in place, in keeping, in harmony; they are characteristic of this country-side; they

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are *fit*, and therefore they are rightly artistic in effect. The lawns themselves are not smooth and velvety like those of a Newport villa ; but they are evidently lawns and not meadows, and their comparative roughness is, again, entirely pleasing because entirely appropriate.

And flowers? Somewhere, out of sight of the house and the main drives, near the kitchen-gardens, there is a garden for florists' flowers. And elsewhere, too, there are flowers in plenty — on the slender shrubs which grow beneath the trees, on the thickets of vines and bushes which border the open stretches of road, all through the grasses of the meadows, and all among the rocks which form the transition from lawns and copses to narrow beaches ; but these are all wild flowers. Nature plants them, and Nature is allowed to grow them as she will ; they may not be roughly handled by man, and neither may their harmonious beauty be disturbed by any of man's additions.

Here, too, where art has done nothing but disengage, clarify, and preserve, we find

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the artistic merits which characterize the suburban place where art has planted, composed, created. Here, too, are breadth and unity of effect, repose, simplicity, and consistent character, and yet variety, mystery, contrasts, and surprises. Here, where no professed artist has worked, no botanical or horticultural knowledge has been needed, and no gardener at all is kept, the eye rests upon a work of art ; for Nature has been cajoled into doing real gardening work by the bribe of artistic non-interference on the part of man.

Of course the creation of the one place has needed more knowledge, more time, more skill, and a more experienced taste than what I have called the disengagement of the other. But the second task was, in essence, just as artistic. Blundering execution would have been almost as fatal here as there ; and, besides, the mere conception of such a piece of work—the mere choice of aim and method—gave proof of remarkable good taste. It is easier to understand that much must be done than that little may be done and yet a good work of art result ;

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and it is a great deal easier, whatever one's scheme, to work it out too far than sternly to hold one's hand at just the right moment. I have said that in a work of gardening art, as in a work of architectural art, the plan, the scheme, the fundamental idea, is the main thing, and that this Nature never can supply ; and I have also said that most people, in their gardening, think more of everything else than of a plan. But for this sea-shore country-place the owner conceived a very beautiful plan ; he has consistently adhered to it while letting Nature do everything else ; and the outcome is a singularly successful, a singularly individual and personal work of art. "I think," wrote Addison, "there are as many kinds of gardening as of poetry." A very beautiful idyllic poem has been written on the face of the suburban country-place which I have tried roughly to describe. But Addison's further words might well be affixed to the gate-lodge of the place on Buzzard's Bay : "You will find that my compositions in gardening are altogether after the Pindaric manner, and run into the beautiful wildness of Nature with-

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out affecting the nicer elegancies of art." Too often, on similar sites, these nicer elegancies are sought, and, mingling with the wild Pindaric local strains which they cannot extinguish, produce an inartistic, because an inharmonious, effect.

I have cited these two cases to show that exceptional men, if they take time and trouble, if they work slowly, carefully, and lovingly enough, may master difficult problems in the art of gardening. And, of course, what can be done on a large scale can more easily be done on a small scale. Nevertheless, it must not be thought that I mean it is wise, on general principles, to dispense with professional help. I mean just the opposite. I have cited these two cases for encouragement; now, for right instruction, I will say that they are the only two I have ever seen where, without professional help—or at least without the advice of men well experienced in artistic composition of some sort—an amateur has laid out his domain with entire success. Well-designed large country-places, devoid of conspicuous

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blemishes, are a great deal rarer than well-designed large buildings ; and we can find twenty good villas or cottages for one small stretch of ground which is in any degree an artistic picture. The more a man loves, in an unreasoning way, the works of Nature, the more likely he is to think that he cannot have too many of them in his grounds, and no error is so fatal as this to a good general result. And the stronger his horticultural passion, the more apt he is to care about novelties and eccentricities — about conspicuous plants as such ; and the profuse use of these gives a last fatal touch to the inartistic disorder of the usual overcrowded domain.

No ; we want artists to help us with our grounds as much as to help us with our houses ; and we want them most of all before our houses have been founded or even planned. But when we cannot have them we should try, in a reasoning, intelligent, systematic, and therefore artistic way, to conceive what their aims would be and to follow out their methods. We should decide upon some scheme of design, whether

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our acres be many or our square rods be few ; make sure that, given our special site and our special tastes, it is a good scheme ; and then consider our plants and other materials, not chiefly for their individual charms, but for their value as factors in the general picture we desire. I fear I shall say this very often ; but if it could be said a hundred times a year to every owner of American ground, it would be a good thing for all the people who live in America.

III

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“The first law of a painting and of a picture on the soil is to be a whole. . . . Without principles and without discernment one never attains veritable beauty.”

—*Edouard André.*

“That is best which lieth nearest,
Shape from that thy work of art.”

—*Longfellow.*

III



THE union—a happy marriage it should be—between the house beautiful and the ground near it,” says a recent English writer, “is worthy of more thought than it has had in the past ; and the best ways of effecting that union artistically should interest men more and more as our cities grow larger, and our lovely English landscape shrinks back from them.”

This writer is an enthusiast for “natural” gardening methods, so we are not surprised to find that, in speaking of the ground near a country-house, he should say little about harmonizing it with the house itself, but much about uniting it agreeably with the landscape beyond its own borders. He calls this ground “the garden,” which is its right old-fashioned name. But, in America at least, “garden” is most generally understood as meaning very small grounds,

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or an enclosure of some sort where plants are grown chiefly for the sake of their own individual beauties ; and so, with us, "home-grounds" is a better term when we want to speak more broadly.

Speaking, then, of all the grounds near the house, this Englishman explains that there are situations, as on the hill-sides of Italy, where the character of the spot prescribes a formal, semi-artificial kind of treatment. But, he continues, "the lawn is the heart of the true English garden, and as essential as the terrace is to the gardens on the steep hills ;" and, in general, these words are true for America as well. In fact, there is less need in America than in England to protest against the making of formal gardens where naturalistic lawns with appropriate framings and backgrounds of foliage should exist. It would be difficult to discover any American homes where "on level ground the terrace-walls cut off the view of the landscape from the house, and, on the other hand, the house from the landscape." Nevertheless, there are certain errors in garden-design into which we are as apt to fall as the Eng-

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lish, and we should be doubly anxious to avoid them, for, it seems, our architects are succeeding better than the English in creating that "house beautiful" which must be the centre of the complex ultimate picture. If the taste of the writer whom I quote can be trusted, "most of the houses built in our time" in England "are so bad that even the best garden could not save them from contempt;" while, although we often build bad houses too, many of our country-homes are so very good that we think with a pang how much better yet they would be were their home-grounds properly planned and planted.

How to plan and plant such grounds is a most interesting question, although, of course, varying with each individual case, it cannot be approached theoretically except in a very general way. Let us, however, suppose that a house has been advantageously placed and attractively designed, that it looks out upon a beautiful landscape, and that the intervening space is of such extent and character that it can be made an harmonious link between house and landscape, giving the house a

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fitting environment when it is seen from a distance, and the landscape a fitting foreground when it is seen from the house. The two questions then are, How to plant, and, What to plant.

As regards the former, one cannot answer theoretically except by saying that there should, if possible, be a wide extent of lawn or lawns to give repose and unity to the picture, with surrounding plantations, varied in mass and sky-line, to enframe the lawns and connect them with the landscape; that open outlooks should be left (but not too generously) for the contemplation of the most beautiful parts of the background; that all disagreeable objects should be carefully masked from sight; and that roads and walks should be as few and inconspicuous as convenience will allow. If a good landscape-gardener is employed these arrangements will be planned and their preliminary portions will be executed without much trouble to the owner. But in settling the question what to plant in completing them, the landscape-gardener, in America as in Eng-

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land, sometimes seems as much in need of guidance as the owner ; and even when his ideas are entirely right, the owner too often interferes with their execution or adds inharmonious details of his own as the years go by.

Our English author is partially correct when he says that most people who care for gardens (still taking the word in the wide sense he gives it) suppose that they are made for plants, and that "if a garden has any use it is to treasure for us beautiful flowers, trees, and shrubs." But this idea of a garden's function is much too narrow. The home-grounds form, beyond question, a place where beautiful plants should be fostered. But they should also form an entity, a composition, a picture which will be beautiful as a whole and in harmony with its surroundings. And, however well planned, such a composition, such a natural picture, may be shorn of beauty and rendered painfully artificial if its elements, big or small, are injudiciously selected.

Our Englishman's decision is that "the true use and first reason" of the home-

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grounds is “to keep and grow for us plants *not* in our woods, and mostly from other countries than our own.” But this, it seems to me, is a very mistaken decision. I quote it simply because so many American gardeners and amateurs consciously or instinctively adopt it, and, so doing, usually spoil the home-grounds which they are anxious to adorn.

The true use and first purpose of the home-grounds is to grow for us beautiful plants of such a kind that their right association will make a beautiful whole, beautifully in keeping with the house on the one hand and with the outer landscape on the other. In fitting them for this purpose we are at liberty to get our trees, shrubs, and flowers where we will, provided we introduce none which, by a discordant note, will mar that general effect which must be determined by soil, situation, and climate, and by the character of the house and of the local landscape.

To be harmonious, and therefore beautiful, grounds over which we see the Berkshire Hills or the valley of the Hudson must

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evidently be American gardens, just as those in the valley of the Thames must be English, and those on the southern shore of France must have the mixed, semi-tropical character peculiar to the Mediterranean coast. To secure this local character, local plants are essential as a foundation ; and then, to give variety, interest, and the true garden-like air and charm, exotics should be mingled with them. But these exotics should never be chosen for their rarity or novelty alone, or even for their intrinsic beauty ; and still less, as is too commonly the case, should they be chosen for their mere conspicuousness. First of all they should harmonize with the other plants about them, and therefore the novice may well hesitate before dipping deeply into those stores of foreign plants which are now so vast and varied and accessible. His choice will not be narrow, if, in addition to native plants, he selects such as have come from lands with climates akin to our own.

In using these last he will be following Nature's own example. Here in America she does not confine herself to growing plants

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which were originally American. She takes up vegetable immigrants as hospitably as our civilization takes up human immigrants, and assimilates them as quickly and naturally. Who would suspect the white willow or the barberry in New England, or the pawlonia in the woods of Maryland, to be an exotic? Or the field-daisy which fills all our meadows? And who sees anything inharmonious or strange in the aspect of the ailanthus-trees which, mingling with native elms, shade the rustic streets of Nantucket? Nature chooses which exotics she will grow for what we may call scientific reasons, but the artistic effect of her results is invariably good. And man should learn from her how to make a similar choice, taking a wider liberty, of course, when he is planting a garden than when he is planting a forest, but never forgetting that, in gardens such as we have now in mind, he should grow together only such plants as will look well together. There are exotic flowers which look as natural, as appropriate in a garden, as the marguerite of Europe looks in our fields. But there are others which seem entirely out of place as

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parts of an American garden if it has any design—any character—at all.

I do not mean to disparage the cultivation of rare or novel or conspicuous plants, whether native or exotic. It is a delightful task to collect plants for their own sakes, without any reference to their relation with the surrounding scenery. But collections should be arranged on spots specially set apart for them, where they will not injure the main picture formed by the general environment of the house and the encircling landscape. As regards the grounds—the “garden” in its wider sense—they will assuredly be most beautiful, interesting, and enjoyable when both native and foreign plants have been used in tasteful combination. But, if confined to one of these classes, it would be much worse to choose “plants not in our woods and fields and mostly from countries not our own,” than to choose our own. Using native plants alone, one would miss a thousand chances to secure a delightful variety. But using the others alone, there would be the certainty of an inharmonious whole—a garden filled with beautiful plants

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which would not be a beautiful garden, or an appropriate environment for the house, or a suitable foreground for the outer landscape of American forest, hill, and stream.

I do not know that I should say so confidently that a planter may be very chary in his use of exotic plants, or even dispense with them altogether, were I writing in England. Our country is incomparably richer in forms of vegetation than is any European land, and especially in those larger forms which are the planter's chief reliance when he works on an extensive scale. To say this we need not match our whole big fatherland against a smaller European one, or even against the whole of Europe. When the first explorers landed, when no seeds had been sown here but those of Nature's sowing, these Atlantic and Middle States would have seemed very rich if matched against all of Europe. Were the Englishman of to-day confined to his woods and fields, deprived of what ours have sent him, he would be poor indeed. But did we appreciate the half of our treasury, we should see how little we really need Europe or Asia or Africa

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to help us to furnish forth our works of landscape-art.

Yet, although we do not actually need them, their help is very welcome if we take it in proper fashion. We should add other things to ours without overwhelming ours and thus selling our birthright of individuality for what, alas, too often proves a mess of motley herbage ; and we should call upon Europe and Eastern Asia, akin in climate to our Eastern America, rather than upon the tropics, and those other lands where vegetable types have developed in harmony with natural conditions that are not our own. We want American gardens, American landscapes, American parks and pleasure-grounds, not the features of those of a dozen different countries huddled together into a scene which has no simplicity, harmony, or unity, and therefore no character — no likeness to Nature, and therefore no artistic worth.

IV

Close to the House

“The Walls enriched with Fruit-trees and faced with a covering of their leafy extensions; I should rather have said hung with different Pieces of Nature's noblest Tapestry.”

—*James Hervey.*

IV



HARMONY between the home-grounds and the outer landscape will not alone suffice to make a country-place a beautiful picture. To complete this picture there must be harmony between the grounds and the house itself. And all the more distant devices of the gardener will not effect this unless its walls seem integrally united to Mother Earth.

With the architect as he develops a design appropriate to the given situation and the owner's needs, or as, in consultation with the landscape-gardener, he determines the site of the house, we are not just now concerned. But it is also the architect who must take the first step toward well uniting walls and ground if the planter is afterward to perfect the union. Sometimes he must prepare for terraces or other semi-architectural accompaniments; and always he must

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seize upon every peculiarity of the site which can be used to give his building the look of belonging just where it stands—to make it appear as though it could not be moved anywhere else without detriment to its own effect.

Not many years ago we thought broken, irregular sites undesirable, and, when they could not be avoided, often levelled and smoothed them that the house-foundations might be laid with mechanical symmetry. But of late our architects have realized that such sites are apt to be the best of all if thought and skill are brought to bear upon them, giving a chance for architectural individuality as well as for an integral union of architectural and natural features.

When the slopes of an irregular site are gentle and devoid of rocks, a beautiful result can be achieved by respecting their undulations, laying more or fewer courses of foundation-stones according as they rise or fall, and bringing the grass up to the base of these courses in an uneven, billowy, yet not too broken line. Richardson often did

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this, and such buildings as his Public Library at Quincy, Massachusetts, which faces on a small and very gently modelled lawn, owe much of their charm to the resultant look of being firmly rooted in the ground. When, on the other hand, the site is rocky, and local stone can be used, rough-faced, for the foundations, the result may be just as charming while a great deal more striking, as we see in another work of Richardson's—the Town Hall at North Easton, Massachusetts, where the rock-like turret seems almost to have grown naturally from the rocky hill-side. The beautiful Beverly shore, to the northward of Boston, runs out into little rocky promontories, divided by coves with tiny white beaches; and on these promontories and the sloping banks of the coves excellent use has been made of natural irregularities of site, each demanding a fresh architectural solution, but each permitting a final picture where the house seems indeed to belong in the most intimate way to the special spot it occupies. If such sites as these had been levelled, the house would have been injured as greatly as the

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grounds around it. Now the two are in harmony ; each helps the effect of the other, and the general picture seems all the more home-like because so very individual.

But even in such cases as these Nature merely prepares the way, the architect takes the first step, and then, most often, the planter must carefully finish their beginnings. Only in very rough little houses, built in very wild localities, can the natural surroundings rightly be left untouched, and natural forces be trusted to add all needful details of completeness to the pretty picture. And when a house stands on a flat, commonplace site, then the planter's aid is trebly needful if it is to look as though it really belonged there—if it is not to have a casual inconsequent air, like a box standing upon a floor. Then, if there is a difference of level between the actual site and the adjacent grounds, some simple arrangement of terraces may well be used. But this alone will not suffice. Terraces or no terraces, flat sites or broken ones, the effect will be best when the planter has most intelligently assisted the architect.

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If a site is very broken and rocky, and if the architect has done his work well, the planting of a few vines against his walls may often suffice to bring them into a close enough union with Mother Earth. It is a pity, however, that when vines alone are thus relied upon, a single kind should usually be chosen for repeated planting. A little thought given to the selection of different kinds which harmonize yet contrast would produce more beautiful effects. It is well on a city house to let a single plant do the whole work of clothing the walls. Here there is no question of uniting house and site, of making a naturalistic effect; and we do not want picturesque variety on a street façade, even though it be a very broad one. A symmetrical architectural effect should be preserved; and for this a wisteria trained on two or three wires reaching to the roof, or a closely clipped covering of Japanese ivy, is the best resource. But on a country house of the irregular, picturesque kind which must be built on a broken site, draperies composed of a single creeper are undesirably monotonous.

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Suppose, for instance, that on a broken site you have a house which shows a long main wall, of rough stone below and of wood above, with at one end a projecting turret where the stone-work has been carried to a higher point, and at the other end a piazza with sturdy posts and a low sloping roof. Clothe such a house all in creepers of one sort and you do your best to obliterate the architect's accentuations, and to turn what should be a strikingly picturesque into a monotonous picture. But plant Japanese ivy against the long recessed wall; let Virginia-creepers drape, more loosely and boldly, the projecting turret; in the angle between the turret and the long wall set a trumpet-creeper whose dark glossy foliage will contrast with the lighter tone of the Japanese Ivy and the medium tone of the turret-vines; let honeysuckles and clematis twine around your piazza-posts, and then you will have draperies which will be beautifully varied in themselves and will accent, not conceal, the architect's intentions, while bringing his features into closer harmony with

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one another and the ground which bears them.

This is only a typical suggestion, exactly fitted, perhaps, for not one house in a thousand. But although sites, exposures, climates, and the colors and materials of house-walls vary much, there is a great treasury of vines and creepers to draw upon, and in few cases need a planter be at a loss for draperies of entire appropriateness. The important things are, to know just what your house needs, and to know just how the different creepers look when they are growing on a house, and under just what conditions each one will grow best.

Each vine, each creeper, has a special character of its own, determined by its habit of growth as well as by the character of its foliage and flowers. Wisteria, for example, will not cling to a flat wall ; it needs some other support. It will clamber very high with the aid of a single wire, but, as it then looks, is best in place on a city house or on a country house of formal design. On picturesque houses it looks better if trained over a trellis-work of wires against a wall,

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or if allowed to cover a balcony, forming irregular masses which are scarcely more charming when in profuse flower than later, when the luxuriant foliage is fully developed.

The Virginia-creeper adapts itself in the most versatile way to such supports as it may find, now twining around a fence or lattice and throwing out long free streamers, and now spreading a flat yet gracefully flowing mantle over wide, plain walls. It stands midway in habit between the wisteria and the Japanese ivy—less massive than the former, less delicate and closely clinging than the latter, which adheres to the smoothest walls almost as though each of its leaves had been carefully spread out and fastened in place. A judicious union of these three vines is far more beautiful on a country house than either one alone could be, if for each that spot is chosen where its manner of growth will look most appropriate. And, if the climate permits the use of English ivy, this will be an invaluable addition, not only because it is green in winter as well as summer, but because it gives the planter a still darker note of color for

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the accentuation of his harmony, and still bolder and more varied masses of foliage.

There are a multitude of other hardy vines which ought to be commonly employed—climbing roses and honeysuckles, for example, clematis of many kinds, and trumpet - creepers, the bitter - sweet, the poison - ivy, the Dutchman's - pipe, and our wonderfully beautiful wild grapevines. Not all of them will grow in all places, or in all ways, and not all will look well together ; but each has its special beauty, and they offer endless possibilities for beautiful combinations. The substance and color of the house must of course be considered, as well as their own peculiarities. The splendid foliage - masses of the trumpet - creeper and its brilliant clusters of orange-flowers look better against gray wood than against red brick, while brick is the more favorable background for Japanese ivy, both in summer when it shows tints of light yellowish green, and in winter when, against a contrasting color, its delicate traceries of gray branchlets look as though etched by a skillful human hand.

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I do not speak of annual vines in this connection, for the garment which is to unite the walls of the house with the soil should be woven of lasting materials. Otherwise the work will never be thoroughly well accomplished, and, such as it is, will have to be done over again each year. Annual creepers may be planted among those which are permanent, for the sake of still greater variety, but they should not be relied upon as a main resource.

Nor, when the hardy vines are once planted, should they be left to grow in their own wilful way. A house is not like a cliff or a ruin or a blasted tree, where the wilder the growth of the creeper, the more charming and appropriate is the effect. It is (or should be) a work of art to which all its immediate surroundings are kept subordinate ; and its garment of verdure should be adapted to its form, as are the garments of a gracefully draped figure. Its prime end is to give its owners comfortable shelter ; so, no matter how great its picturesqueness, it should always look orderly and well tended ; its vines should be pruned and

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trained with sympathetic discretion, not allowed to run wild, to hang in ragged garlands, and overgrow porches and windows, yet not forced into unnatural stiffness or deprived of their characteristic manners of development.

Nor should they ever be allowed to cover the walls entirely, for the walls, not the creepers, are the main concern. Their architectural character should be kept distinct; and not alone for the sake of one pleasing feature and another, but especially for the sake of that effect of unity between house and grounds which is so important. It is surely a mistake to build a solid lower story of stone or brick, and then allow it to be entirely hidden, even during six months of the year. The beauty of the architectural work is lost, and, besides, the effect of upper stories apparently based on a substructure of fluttering leaves is most unfortunate. The house does not seem to be rooted in the ground; it seems to stand upon an unstable bank of green. Vines enough may be grown to beautify the walls and unite them well with the ground, and yet spaces be reserved, below

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as well as above, where the constructed surface shall appear—spaces which will indicate the general character of the walls, show where the ground ends and they begin, and assure the eye of their stability.

It is a good plan, also, to train some vines so that they shall spread over portions of the ground, and thus make the transition between the soil and the walls seem still more intimate and natural. A mass of honeysuckle, for instance, running out boldly over rock or grass for a little distance, makes a very charming effect, and its bloom will seem even more profuse in this than in an upright position.

But in the majority of cases vines alone should not be depended upon to mask the junction of walls and soil. Unless very irregular rocks form the foundation upon which the walls are set, they will need more massive and spreading foliage at their base. The fact is generally perceived to-day, for we seldom find a suburban or country house where plantations have not been made close to the walls, at least along some part of their

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course. Unfortunately, however, they are usually flower-beds filled with annuals or tender ornamental plants. They look better, perhaps, than utter nakedness, although when the choice is a particularly tasteless one even as much as this cannot be granted.

In the first place, what has been said of annual creepers applies equally to tender plants of other sorts—the work is done, the effect is produced, for the season merely. When winter comes, nakedness returns in a worse shape than if no flowers had been planted; the house stands, not even upon grass, but on a line of empty earth which makes its want of harmony with its surroundings most painfully apparent. And then in the spring the labor of clothing its base must be begun again. In the second place flower-beds are too monotonous. We need more variety of form; we need to diversify the clothing green by massing it, by carrying it up in certain places higher than in others, and by spreading it out here and there to connect or group with other plantations in the vicinity. What we want to mitigate is that rigid formality of architectural features which does

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not blend with the undulating variety of growing things ; and a flower-bed is almost as artificial, as rigid in effect, as foundation-courses of masonry. Of course, if the whole garden is formally disposed, then the base-plantations may correspond ; but such cases are rare in this country, and a natural arrangement of the grounds demands a thoroughly natural-looking garment for the lower walls. Hardy shrubs are the things we need to make an encircling garment which shall be high in some places, low in others ; here dense and massive, there light and graceful ; now clinging closely to the walls and now spreading away a little, or running along beyond the end of the house to border a path or mask the foundations of an adjacent enclosure. Shrubs give us everything that is thus required, and in endless variety.

But just in the profusion of species among which he can choose lies danger for the planter. When so many beautiful shrubs are offered by the nurseryman, and so many striking novelties, he may easily forget his main purpose, think too much of the claims

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of individual plants, and thus produce a confused medley instead of an harmonious, appropriate garment for the base of his walls. Here, even more, if possible, than in other portions of the home-grounds, appropriateness should be the first touch-stone to determine choice. If "specimen plants" are wanted for their own sakes, this is the last place where they should be put.

Here, if a tall shrub is planted it should be because a tall one is needed, not because a particularly handsome tall one has been seen in a nursery or in some neighbor's grounds. The question should not be whether one likes lilacs especially, but whether lilac-bushes can be well used in the general scheme. With a little care a good spot can be found for any special favorite ; or, if not, something that will win itself as high a place in its owner's affections can be found to use instead.

Of course an overuse of shrubs should be avoided. We do not want a house to look as though it grew in a thicket, or as though the cultivation of shrubs were its owner's chief concern. Mass shrubs in the angles of

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porches, steps, or bay-windows, carry them along in lower groups, then break them, and for a little space let the foundations be seen resting on the grass, in order that their stability may be clearly manifest, and then, in another angle, place another more important group. Take the outline of the house and the character of its features as your guide, and accent these while uniting the building, as a whole, with its site. And do not conceal beautiful adjacent features, but sedulously "plant out" those which, like out-houses and drying-yards, should not be seen.

Plant closely at first and then, as the individuals develop, thin out those which are no longer needed, for crowded, ill-grown shrubs are as ineffective as a garment for the walls as painful to the eye of the true lover of plants. Each shrub should be well developed and have room to display its peculiar habit, and the masses, as a whole, should have that play of light and shade and that freedom of movement which are ruined by overcrowding. Above all, never shear off the tops of these shrubs to a horizontal line,

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nor clip them into stiff or formal shapes, nor trim away their lower branches and cut back their heads to make them look like dwarfed trees. All pruning and training should be done with a view to bringing out the distinctive character of the shrubs ; none should be forced into alien and unnatural forms. Shrubs which stand in front of a plantation should sweep the grass with their branches. Behind these may stand others of a different habit ; but to place individuals which naturally grow their branches high above the soil in the foreground, or to clip others till they present a similar but, of course, less pleasing appearance, is to give any shrubbery a bald, ill-grown, and ungraceful look. Nor is there any shrubbery where this look is so unfortunate as in one the very purpose of which is to unite the base of a house with the ground upon which it stands. If a shrub thus placed grows too large, take it out, and let its neighbors gradually fill the space or plant a smaller one in its stead. Severe cutting will only spoil it, and in spoiling it you will injure the effect of the whole group to which it belongs.

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Color should be especially regarded in choosing shrubs and creepers. One monotonous tint of green is to be avoided, but still more, an excessive use of bright-hued plants. Green is Nature's color. In this climate she spontaneously produces few bright-hued plants; the great majority of those which the nursery-gardener offers us are sports and freaks of Nature which she herself, perhaps, would regard as lamentable mistakes. Curiosities have, however, a great attraction for the average man, especially at the moment when they rank as novelties also; and far too many places are disfigured by an accumulation of abnormally colored plants, with striped or blotched or speckled foliage, and especially with foliage of those sickly yellow hues which in nursery catalogues are poetically called "golden." A single plant of this sort may often produce a pretty effect, if grouped among others of a normal tint—as a slender golden honeysuckle climbing amid others of ordinary kinds, or a single red Japanese maple associated with a mass of dark green shrubs. But to plant too many of them, and to mingle reds and yel-

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lows, streaks and spots, in the reckless manner that we often see, is to destroy all peacefulness and unity as well as all naturalness of effect.

But, even when shrubs of a normal hue are adhered to, there is still need for selection. The different shades of green should be well distributed. Each should form a mass of sufficient size to prevent any look of spottiness in the general effect, each should harmonize with its immediate neighbors, and each should be in right relationship to the house itself. A dark blue-green should not come in contact with a light and rather yellowish-green; there should be a medium tint to make a transition between them. Nor does a pale grayish-green harmonize well with a yellowish tint, although, against a dark blue-green, it may look well. Again, a rather yellowish shrub, which might have an excellent effect against a shingled or a painted wooden house, may look too crude against a red brick wall, while each different color in stone will make a different demand upon the exhaustless resources of the intelligent planter. In general, if dark foliage is

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used in the background and lighter foliage in the foreground, and if there is more variety of hue near the eye than farther back, the shrubbery will gain in depth and richness of effect.

Natural development, I say, is what we want in a base-line of shrubs and vines where the home-grounds are naturalistically treated; and quiet green must be the dominant color. But there are certain brilliant color-effects, of a transitory sort, which the planter would be foolish, nay, culpable, to neglect. I mean the color-effects which will come and go as the blossoms of vines and shrubs open and wither. So vast is the variety of species bearing conspicuous flowers that one might easily plant a great shrubbery which, at a given moment, would hardly show a green leaf at all. But this is not what we want around house-foundations. We want shrubs which will blossom successively, one unfolding its flowers as the flowers of its neighbors fade, and all together giving us at all seasons a general mass of green with here and there a lovely bouquet

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of harmonious color. Early in the year a few little Japanese quinces next the grass may flame out a prophecy of spring's approach ; later, the small Judas - tree behind them may outline its crimson branches against the wall, soon to replace their crimson with green. When the lilacs in this corner have faded, the viburnums in that corner will be growing white ; and so the succession may be kept up until, in August, there is little but a harmony of green tones except where a trumpet-creeper is magnificent with tawny clusters.

Later, when flowers have turned into fruit, we may have charming accents of color again, if we know what plants are most beautiful in fruiting. And even in winter we may have lovely color-effects if, in addition to the evergreens which we have wisely mingled in our plantation, we have wisely chosen some shrubs which carry their leaves—half-withered but still with a charm of their own—partly through the snowy months, some which keep their bright hips and berries for a still longer time, and some which have twigs and branches of soft red or golden hues.

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More color than these devices can give us we do not need in the garment of our foundation-walls. A little more may be supplied, if you will, by a few tall hardy flowering plants, like hollyhocks and the more delicate of the sunflowers, set against the open spaces of wall, or in angles where the neighboring shrub-forms accord with them. But it is less wise to scatter exotics about, both because they need annual replanting and because they are unlikely to harmonize with their shrubby associates. And all pattern-bedding or massing of brilliant flowers should be avoided here with the sternest self-restraint.

They have a terrible fashion just now in Europe which I hope will never become a fashion in America. Often where a beautiful mass of shrubs had grown for awhile in free development, sweeping the grass with its delicate leaves and sprinkled flowers, the lower branches have been cut away and, between the shrubs and the grass, a pattern-border has been laid out, or rows of gay annuals have been set. Nothing uglier could be imagined—nothing more needless,

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senseless, inharmonious. And it is almost as bad to plant borders like this in front of a shrubbery without cutting away its branches, or to set pattern-beds a little farther off but where they will still interfere with its simplicity, its unity, its naturalistic grace.

V

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“The will of the workeman, in doing and bestowing of charges, shall smally avayle, without he have both arte and skill in the same. For that cause, it is the chiefest poynte . . . to understand and know what to begin and follow.”

—*Dydymus Mountaine.*

“If the space be divided into little slips and made only a collection of walks, it forfeits all its advantages, loses its character, and can have no other excellence than such as it may derive from situation.”

—*Thomas Whately.*

V



It is generally thought that in planning a country-place, whether large or small, the one important thing to be considered is the situation of the house. Aspect and prospect—the way the house will look to the passer-by or the approaching visitor, and the way the landscape will look from its windows and piazzas—are supposed to be questions of such paramount importance that the choice of a site may well be made and the house constructed before anything else is arranged. Important questions these are, indeed, yet there is another of quite as much importance—one which must be borne in mind from the outset if aspect and prospect themselves are to be satisfactory in the end. This is the arrangement of the various roads and paths which run through the property. Convenience as well as beauty dictates that the position of the house and its

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dependencies shall not be determined until this arrangement has been mapped out.

If the grounds are large, and their surface is not perfectly flat and uniform, it may easily happen that, on the site which seems best to the architect, the relative positions of the high road and the entrance-front would be such that no good approach could be designed. For an approach to be good there must be an easy turn-in from the high road ; the grade within the gate must be uniform and as gentle as possible ; there must be no sharp turns, dangerous alike to meeting vehicles and to bordering turf ; the house must be well displayed to advancing eyes ; and the line of gravel must not so intersect the ground as to interfere with a beautiful arrangement of its parts, or to be itself a disagreeable object when seen from the house. Too often not one of these necessities is fulfilled in the approach, although all might have been fulfilled had the house been properly placed. Sometimes even a change in position so slight that it would not have perceptibly altered either aspect or prospect in general, would have made all the differ-

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ence between a bad approach and a good one.

It is folly, every one will confess, to force a landscape-gardener to lay out a straight road where a curved one would look better, or a curved road where a direct one would be more sensible and therefore more beautiful; to compel him to run a road over a hillock which it might encircle, or down into a hollow and up again when it might pass to one side; to give him no convenient access to the high road except at a point where turning-in is awkward; to forbid him to take in a good point of view which might easily be shown from the drive, or to show unpleasing objects which might be concealed. And yet it would be easy to point to many American places where just such necessities have been forced upon the landscape-gardener by an error in the placing of the house, or where, to avoid them, he is compelled to spend a large amount of money, and perhaps to injure the general effect of the place, in altering the configuration of the ground. When the position of the principal entrance relative to the high road

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and to the varieties of surface in the ground has been settled, there is nothing left for him but to do the best he can with his approach ; this often means something very different from the best that might have been done ; and upon the character of the approach may depend the success or failure of the place as a whole.

In places of much size a curved entrance-drive is better than a straight one. Naturally, there may be a case when a wide straight avenue can, with advantage, be carried in a direct line through a great estate, leading to a house whose architectural majesty demands a very dignified approach. But such cases rarely occur in America. As a rule what we call a large place is not large according to English ideas, at least in so far as the ornamental grounds are concerned ; and a house which we consider stately, an Englishman would be apt to call merely comfortable. Almost without exception, therefore, wide straight drives are inadmissible in this country, except in public parks ; a curved road is better, because

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less pretentious, easier to build and to drive upon unless the land be perfectly flat, more beautiful in itself, in truer harmony with the character of our buildings, and less decidedly artificial.

But as all roads and walks are palpably artificial, no matter how they may be designed or of what material they may be composed, it is not good art to make too evident an effort to conceal the fact. The real reason for the existence of the drive—its utility—should always be acknowledged to the eye as well as practically secured. This means that even when the approach is curved it should not circle about to an excessive degree, irrationally increasing the distance that must be traversed before the house can be reached, and, when its course is overlooked from the house, wearing an unmeaning, wandering look. English writers on landscape-gardening often deplore the fact that, in the effort to make a display of magnitude in the estate or to show various effective points of view, an approach has been so laid out that it is positively irritating to the visitor ;—when he thinks he is

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near his destination he finds himself carried away again, and sometimes this process is repeated several times. In addition to the pretentiousness and inconvenience of such an arrangement it injures the place as a whole, for there is no more fundamental principle in the art of gardening than that the fewer the roads and walks the better, and the shorter their course, consistent with convenience and good lines, the better, too. A line of gravel is not a beautiful object in itself:—it is conspicuous on account of its difference in color from the surrounding verdure, and wherever it comes it cuts a landscape-composition in two as with a knife. Its virtue lies in being at once as useful and as inconspicuous as possible.

A happy mean between the two extremes of mathematical rigidity and irrational irregularity is what we want in an approach—a line which is direct enough to seem sensible and yet curved enough to give grace and variety. Sometimes its bends will be dictated by conspicuous irregularities in the surface of the ground, or by existing trees

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which it is desirable to preserve. Then they will be evidently rational, and, if well drawn, entirely pleasing to the eye. But sometimes there will be no such reasons for curvature, and yet curvature will be necessitated by convenience in driving and by the general desire to avoid too stiff a line. In such cases a good landscape-gardener will make the curves seem natural by some device of his own—by altering the surface of the ground, or by planting. When his work is done, and time has assisted it a little, the effect should be the same as though Nature had prescribed the line of his drive. The drive may have been the first consideration, and the objects which govern its course merely later adjuncts ; the curve may have been the necessity, the hillock, the tree, or the group of shrubs a device to excuse it. But the eye need not realize the fact ; the surface irregularities and the plants may be made to seem the cause, and the curve the natural consequence. To secure such a result is one of those artifices which are inexcusable if they fail of the right effect, but which are the highest kind of art—the art that conceals

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art—if they produce this effect. It is an artistic mistake to make too palpable an attempt to disguise the utilitarian character of a road as a means of transit from one given point to another ; but it is an artistic triumph to make it look as though, while affording such transit with reasonable directness, it had chanced to follow a line that is beautiful too. Of course, while the careless observer will be deceived by the apparent naturalness, the student of art will know that chance has had nothing to do with the matter ; but his eye will accept the appearance of happy accident, and his mind will enjoy it all the more for knowing that the hand of an intelligent man has been at work.

But to make the curves of a drive look natural it is not sufficient that they should have some visible reason for existing. The objects which supply the reason must themselves look natural, or the artificiality of the whole arrangement will at once be plain. To throw up a hillock or plant a tree or a group of trees or shrubs in a spot where it will deflect the road will be futile unless it looks as though, for other reasons, it ought

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to be there ; and to look thus it must compose well with the features around it and play an acceptable part in the general prospect. The hillock must blend and harmonize with the general conformation of the ground, and the plants must form agreeable masses—not too large for their places, nor so small as to look as though they had been dropped down by accident—and must usually be supported by other plantations in their vicinity. On a lawn which is large enough to be crossed by a road at all, there will be space for other trees and shrubs besides those which may immediately border the road ; and all should be so arranged that the eye will be convinced that, if the individuals which seemingly force the road to curve had been removed, the effect of the remainder and of the prospect as a whole would have suffered. They should seem to have stood, before the road was built, in places where they were needed as items in an harmonious picture ; and the road should seem to have respected them for this reason. Nor is it needful that every deflection in the road should be excused in just this way. For example, the

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approach may diverge to the right to avoid a beautiful tree ; if it must then turn again to the left to reach the house in a convenient and pleasing way, this fact is its own sufficient explanation.

Whatever the objects chosen to justify the bends in a road, they should not be flower-beds. Anything which forces a carriage to turn from the direct path should be a real and a permanent obstacle—something over which wheels could not pass, and which could not be removed without destroying it. To make a flower-bed play the part of an obstruction to vehicles gives a deplorable look of triviality and wilfulness ; yet there are few objects so often seen in the bend of a road which crosses a lawn. The truth is, probably, that the road has been curved without thought of supplying a reason for the curve, simply because it could not be carried straight or because of the belief that a curve, managed in any way, would be beautiful ; and then the flower-bed has been thought of because the elbow in the grass seemed to offer a “good place” for it.

But its trivial, ephemeral nature is not the

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only reason why a flower-bed is unsuitable in such a position. A lawn which is large enough to be crossed by a road has a somewhat park-like character, and in a park-like landscape a flower-bed is utterly out of place. The crude bright spot it makes is disagreeable enough in a small expanse of lawn, but doubly disagreeable when there is so much space that an effect of broad unity, of almost rural repose and peace, might be secured. And where a flower-bed is out of place, so, too, of course, are small, isolated plants, and especially those which have evidently been brought from the green-house and must soon be returned to it.

But when is a lawn large enough to be crossed by a driveway? Only when it is so extensive that a wide space in front of the principal side of the house can be left undisturbed by its intrusive, artificial line. That is to say, a drive should really never cross a lawn, although it may divide one lawn from another which can be treated as an almost independent picture. As a feature in a picture a road or walk is always to be deplored ;

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but as a frame which encircles a picture it may be made inoffensive, and sometimes, with its bordering plantations, actually advantageous. Too wide and open a prospect is not desirable any more than one too cramped and crowded; and while plantations are often needed to justify the course of the road, they are also needed to adorn it to the eyes of those who pass over it. Trees and shrubs may explain its curvatures, while it will explain the varied charms of shadowing foliage and lower masses of green. Each factor helps the other by giving it a reason for existence, and both together may be beautifully brought into the middle distance, at the side of a landscape picture, framing the foreground and affording glimpses, more attractive than a wholly unobstructed view, into the wider landscape beyond.

To preserve a broad expanse of lawn in front of a house is in itself sufficient excuse for carrying the road to one side. If a minor curve is justified by the wish to preserve a fine tree, so a general deflection from the direct line of approach is justified by the wish to secure that broad stretch of green

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which is the most beautiful of all possible adjuncts to a home—which is the indispensable foreground in any out-door picture where utter wildness of aspect is not desired. A carefully clipped and tended lawn is the first thing to be secured where there is any comparatively level ground, where the house is anything but the simplest cottage, and where the rest of the place is to be “kept up” by the gardener’s hand. If place and purse are so modest that the expense of turfing and clipping cannot be incurred, then a stretch of meadow left in its natural condition is essential; and in either case it is equally necessary that, to produce the right effect of breadth and peacefulness, the grass should be kept as free as possible from roads and walks.

To secure a good lawn where it can be most enjoyed—to keep the approach from cutting into two parts what ought to be an harmonious picture, opposite the chief windows—it is best, of course, not to have the entrance-front of the house and the lawn-front the same. Even though the highway may lie opposite the front where the lawn

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must be made, the approach ought, if possible, to be carried to a door which stands in another side. There will be no look of caprice in such an arrangement, for where the front door is, there, of necessity, the road must go. It will not suffice to carry the road to one side, leaving an agreeable expanse of lawn, and then bring it along close by the house to a door in the lawn-front. This is a very common arrangement but a very bad one. If a road crossing the lawn in full sight of the chief windows and piazzas is offensive, still more so is a road running between the house and the lawn, forming a barren streak in the immediate foreground of the picture, and preventing that union of the house-foundations with the grass which it is so important to secure. Worse than anything else, however, is the wide sweep we constantly see, where, between house and lawn, a road returns upon itself. No one would ruin a fine painted landscape by pasting a strip or great circle of gray paper over the lower part of the foreground; yet this is just what hundreds of owners do with strips and circles of gray

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gravel in their natural landscapes. And how much pleasanter is it for the foot to step from door or window or piazza directly upon the grass than to be obliged to cross a stretch of dusty or muddy road !

In these last paragraphs we find another reason why, as I said before, the house should not be placed or even planned until the roadways have been mapped out. A want of consideration in placing the main entrance may easily ruin the chance, not only for a good approach, but for a good lawn as well. Neither architect nor owner can always tell where it will be best to make the lawn any more than where it will be best to run the roads. The front-door is the end of the approach, and not to consult the landscape-gardener with regard to its position is to strike, without his consent, the key-note which must govern his whole arrangement.

What is true with regard to the length of roads applies also to their width : the less there is of them in either direction the better. A drive where vehicles meet should be wide enough to allow them to pass with-

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out danger to themselves or the borders, but anything in excess of this should be studiously avoided ; and if a turning-place must be provided near the house, the oval should be made as narrow as convenience will allow, or the road should be carried around a plantation of some sort. Here again, however, the plantation should not be a flower-bed. It should not look as though it had been put in to fill up a sweep which had been made too large ; it should not look as though it existed because of the road. The road should look as though it took the encircling curve because there was an obstacle to its turning short upon itself which it was desirable to preserve. And the exact character of this obstacle should be regulated by surrounding things, and especially by those which lie opposite the door. If it is well to shut out something unattractive, then a shrubbery or low-growing tree may fill the space ; or if it is well that the eye should have free passage, then a tree with higher branches may be chosen.

But, of course, the arrangements which are ideally best cannot always be made. In

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many cases where the road can be kept away from the immediate vicinity of the house-front, it will have to pass it at a greater distance. Its presence may then be masked by low plantations which will, at least, be less disagreeable to the eye than the line of gravel. But plantations will often be undesirable as obstructions in what ought to be a simple extended view, or a broadly treated landscape. It is better, when possible, to sink the road, or to raise the lawn in a gentle slope toward it to such a degree that the eye will not perceive it, and that the stretches of lawn on its hither and further sides will seem to unite without a break.

If the place is so large that the house is not seen until after one has entered the approach, attention should be paid to the first view thus afforded. There is much in initial impressions, and a house may never redeem itself wholly in a visitor's eyes if it fails to do itself justice when they first light upon it.

The same general principles hold with regard to walks as with regard to drives.

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There should be no more walks than are needful ; they should neither be so straight as to lack beauty, nor so meandering as to lack good sense ; and they should be as narrow as convenience will permit, for gravel-streaks are not charming objects in themselves, and the greater their breadth the more they decrease the apparent size of the place. A walk six feet wide, where one of three would have sufficed, will dwarf its surroundings to a much greater degree than most owners realize.

A lawn can be injured almost as much by foot-paths as by drives when they cut across it. A properly kept lawn is as delightful to walk upon as to look at, and, in our dry summers, the days are rare when it will be too wet even for a lady's shoe. Of course, there may be cases when some distant object—a summer-house that is constantly used, a boat-house, or a tennis-court—will so constantly attract the feet that, unless a walk be provided, a ragged path will be worn across the grass. Then a made walk is naturally better, for anything is better than a look of untidiness and neglect in grounds which

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ought to be carefully kept. But it should, if possible, be carried around the lawn, and, if this is not possible, its presence should be accepted as a disagreeable necessity.

Paths should never be made across a lawn simply to give access to flower-beds, for the flower-beds themselves have no business there. A lawn is a place for grass. Its object, whether it be large or small, is to afford a simple sheet of verdure to delight the eye with its reposeful breadth, and to supply a proper foreground for the plantations beyond it. To spot bright beds about is to ruin its peacefulness and its unity. There are thousands of country-places in America, from large estates to suburban villas, which would be immeasurably improved could all the flower-beds on the lawn and all the fountains and vases be removed, and all the paths—leading nowhere but back to the house again—be once and for all turfed over. Flowers can usually be introduced in sufficient quantities in other ways—scattered among the shrubberies or arranged in massed beds behind the house, or in borders disassociated from the

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lawn. Or, if they are the prime consideration and the place is not large enough for a lawn and a flower-garden both, it is better to give up the lawn altogether and arrange in front of the house an old-fashioned garden with as many beds and walks and box-hedges as the space will allow. Such a design is consistent and sensible and may be made very pretty, while the more common device of trying to unite a lawn and a flower-garden is illogical, and can never result in anything but an artistic monstrosity.

Where there is a lawn, large or small, no walk should run between it and the house. Let the grass come up to the house-foundations, and unite the two by planting a few vines and shrubs. Then the house and its site will be connected and harmonized; the walls will seem to spring from the soil almost like a natural growth, and the picture seen from the lawn will be as charming as that which the lawn will present when seen from the house. Whether there is a mere door-step, or a porch, or a piazza, no path is needed, for this entrance should be used only by those who wish to stroll upon the

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lawn, or to cross it to some spot not otherwise accessible. And even on those sides of the house where a path is needed it should not be allowed to run close to the walls. Sufficient space should be reserved for planting against the walls, and thus, if the further side of the path is properly planted too, from a little distance the eye will see only the masses of verdure which connect the house with the landscape about it.

When we are thinking not of a country-place but of a more modest home—a simple cottage in a narrow lot or a villa in wider grounds—the first point to be decided is the position of the house as regards distance from the street. Cases are rare in which the configuration of the ground determines this question ; most often it depends merely upon the size of the expanse of level ground, and the taste of the owner. In former days such a house was usually placed quite near the street, its principal lawns and gardens lying in the rear, as we see in Salem, New Bedford, Annapolis, and other colonial towns.

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To-day the most general custom is to set the house well back from the street, leaving room in front for a lawn with trees and shrubs, and in the rear for a fruit or vegetable garden, and often a stable.

This arrangement, consistently followed, is certainly the best as regards the aspect of the street itself, giving it breadth and dignity and a pleasing combination of natural and architectural features. And it is probably the best, too, as regards the comfort and pleasure of the average modern owner, for, while it removes his windows from immediate contact with the street, it permits him still to take a contemplative part in the life of the town, over a foreground green and pleasant to the eye; and this privilege is more valued by the average American than by the average Englishman, while he has not the Englishman's feeling that, to enjoy his own private share of Nature's beauty, he must carefully seclude it from the eyes of others. Colonial builders were English by near descent if not by birth, and their architectural arrangements express the fact, being fitted to English modes of feeling and of liv-

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ing. They lived in their houses or in their gardens ; when their descendants introduced the piazza it marked a compromise in habits, eminently expressive of the less reticent social spirit which had developed in America, and of the peculiarities of the American climate. A house set well back from the road, possessing a piazza where its inhabitants could pass their leisure hours, protected from the sun and screened from too inquisitive passing eyes, became the rule ; a house with its principal rooms on the front, not on the back as in colonial cities, and, naturally, with its garden lying between these rooms and the street.

We may accept this arrangement, then, as the typical one for an American villa, and pass to the question, Where should the main doorway be placed? With a villa, even more than with a true country house, this is a vital question, for the smaller one's grounds, the more need there is that every inch of them shall be made available for beauty.

From the architect's point of view it may seem almost incontestably best to put the

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entrance in the front of the house, as, in small and simple buildings, he must largely depend upon it for the attractiveness of his design. Yet even at some sacrifice of architectural effect it is usually best to place it elsewhere. If the space available for a lawn between house and street is narrow, it is all the greater pity to cut it up with lines of gravel; and if it is wide, it is a pity to sacrifice its opportunities for fine gardening effects. Place the main doorway in the centre of the front and a path must, of course, give access to it, while, if horses are kept, the impulse will be to make the path a drive, although the broader the line of gravel, the more serious the injury to the unity and repose of the garden. It can hardly be disputed that, unless grounds are so extensive as to merit the name of a country-place rather than of villa-grounds, a driveway should never pass through them on the side toward the street. Whether the outlook is inward from the street or outward from the windows, it will injure their beauty more than any other feature which is likely to be desired; and when such grounds are injured, the owner

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has not the chance to turn his eyes for consolation to a more distant landscape, as he may if he owns a country-place where the foreground is similarly disfigured.

When horses are kept and a stable stands in the rear of the house, the main doorway should usually be placed in the side of the house. Then all the drive required will be a single stretch, entering the grounds near their outermost angle, and passing the door on the way to the stable. But the arrangement we more often see to-day, even in very small grounds, is a driveway cutting through the whole extent of the lawn, passing by the door in the front of the house, then encircling the house to reach the stable, and often having an additional curve to allow visitors to enter and leave the grounds without going back to the stable-yard to turn.

If there is no stable, but the need for a carriage-approach is nevertheless felt, of course a similar arrangement is again the best—a drive to a door in the side of the house with a turn in front of it or beyond it. But such a need is more apt to be fanciful

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than real. A short walk to the carriage is seldom a hardship, even for the feet, except in winter ; and a narrow board-walk, temporarily laid down over the gravel or asphalt, will cheaply do away with the greater part of the inconvenience that winter brings. Unless he keeps horses in a stable on the place, or unless there is an invalid in the family whose comfort must be the first consideration, a villa-owner who cares at all for beauty will sacrifice his carriage - approach without a pang.

Yet, even if it is sacrificed, there are still good reasons why the entrance should not be in the front of the house, unless it stands very close to the street or its grounds are very narrow indeed. A foot-walk must lead to it, and I cannot say too often that even the smallest ribbon of gravel is a disfigurement to a lawn. The space to be traversed from street to door will not be perceptibly lengthened by placing the door in the side of the house. And no injury to the plan of the interior need result from the change ; for even if the door admits, not to an old-fashioned narrow entry, but to a hall which

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is used as a living - room, a little ingenuity will suffice to make some of the windows of this hall command the front prospect. Again, unless the grounds are very large, so that there are lawns at side or back as well as in front, the front is the best place for loggias or piazzas ; and these are best fitted for their purpose when disconnected from the entrance and thus protected from the immediate intrusion of visitors, while, by carefully planting near the street-line and the piazza, and carefully designing the piazza itself, it will usually be possible to secure a due degree of privacy as regards passers in the street. We can all remember piazzas, never used in the day-time, which might be perpetually used had the gardener taken a little trouble to screen them. And we have all seen fluttering figures hastily leaving a piazza, to hide themselves indoors, when an undesired visitor was espied in the distance. Better planning would vastly increase the comfort as well as the beauty of our suburban homes ; but it is the sort of planning which demands the landscape-gardener's even more than the architect's assistance.

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When a place is very small indeed, straight drives and paths should be preferred to curved ones, not, as in the case of a palace, for the sake of stateliness, but for the sake of economy of space, harmony, and simplicity. In such a place, I say, every inch of space is precious, and a straight path occupies less space than a curving one. Then, the straight lines formed by the street and the house cannot for a moment be forgotten, and, therefore, it is good art to accept them as the basis of the whole scheme and repeat them in the intermediate lines of gravel. It is difficult, too, to give grace to a sinuous line unless it has considerable length, and the straight line is simpler in effect than a curved one, and simplicity is the greatest possible virtue which very small grounds can have. Of course, if there are irregularities in the surface of the ground, they will determine the trend of the paths ; but the average villa-plot is as flat in surface as it is symmetrical in outline.

VI

Piazzas

“I line it with mats and spread the floor with mats; and there you shall sit . . . and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day.”

—*Cowper*.

“If not engaged in Æsthetic Tea, yet in trustful evening conversation, and, perhaps, Musical Coffee.”

—*Carlyle*.

VI



NOTHING is more characteristic of American country-houses, as contrasted with those of other northern lands, than their large covered piazzas. These have been developed in answer to as distinct and imperative a national need as ever determined the genesis of an architectural feature. Our colonial ancestors did without piazzas, for their habits of living and their architectural schemes were alike imported from England and Holland ; and amid a strenuous people, occupied with sterner problems than how to live most agreeably, it was naturally some time before that gradual modification of habits which is inevitably brought about at last by new climatic influences could express itself in architectural language. No early colonial house had anything that resembled a piazza. If we find one attached to such a house to-day, it is an addition of later date—as is the case

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with the well-known Longfellow house in Cambridge.

But the introduction of classical fashions in architecture meant the erection of porticos, and the addition which they made to comfort has never again been dispensed with. When classic forms were abandoned in favor of what has been dubbed our "vernacular" style of architecture—when little temples gave way to plain, square, box-like houses with gabled roofs—the portico vanished, but its place was taken by a modification of the veranda which had long been in use in all southern lands. I speak of the course of things in our Northern States; at the South, where Spanish influence was felt, verandas and balconies seem to have been used from the earliest times.

When we say a "vernacular" style of architecture, we mean one which has been the unaffected outcome of universal needs and desires and, therefore, whatever its defects from an artistic point of view, must have a large measure of practical fitness to recommend it. Many factors of such a style must persevere if progress in art is to mean

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more beauty and more fitness too ; and, in fact, widely as we have departed from the plain, box-like house in recent years, our best new country houses are, in many respects, developed from them, and most notably so as regards the constant presence of the piazza. Considerations of sentiment and art excuse and make good its absence to the owner of an old colonial house ; but when a new house is desired it is a clearly recognized necessity, even though some colonial scheme may be closely followed in other respects. Only in very rare cases do we see piazzas dispensed with by owners who care more for the odd pleasure of copying with exactness an inappropriate foreign model than for building themselves really comfortable homes.

Certainly no really comfortable country home can exist in our land without a piazza. Even on our most northerly borders the heat of our summer atmosphere and the strength of our sunshine make exercise in the open air, to the extent to which it is practiced in England, for example, a sheer impossibility. Nor, for similar reasons, could we sit with

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comfort on the lawns of England or the uncovered terraces of France, or in the arbors, placed at some distance from the house, which are so characteristic of German villas. We must have a wide and open yet covered space, closely connected with our living-rooms, where we can pass our hours of rest and many of our hours of occupation too. How necessary it is we read in the fact that, when well arranged, the piazza always becomes the very focus of domestic life and social intercourse—as central a feature in summer as the parlor-fireside is in winter.

But it is hardly needful to-day to affirm that an American country house without a piazza is in every sense a mistake and a failure—that it palpably lacks fitness, and therefore must lack true beauty in the eyes of intelligent observers. It is more needful to protest against the excessive use of piazzas than to urge their erection. When their value was first fully appreciated, it was, not unnaturally, overappreciated. Architect and owner alike believed that they could not get too much of them. A house of any importance most often had three if not all of its

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sides encircled by piazzas, and their breadth was apt to be as excessive as their length. To-day a reaction has happily begun. Piazzas on all sides of a house mean that all the rooms are somewhat darkened, and that direct sunshine can nowhere enter the lowest story. This consideration is important even when a house is meant merely for summer use; and it is all-important when winter as well as summer comfort must be secured. Again, experience will always show that only certain favorite corners of very long piazzas are used, so that other portions might be removed and never missed. And, finally, one of the most difficult of current architectural problems is so to treat a piazza that it will seem an integral part of the house instead of a mere attached shed; and, of course, the larger it is, the harder becomes the task. If we look at our best recent houses, we find that the main piazza is confined to one side, or that, placed on a corner, it partly encircles two sides; and there can be few cases in which more than this is needful.

But for this to suffice, the piazza must not

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be considered as a mere adjunct to an interior which may be planned without regard to it. Success in its arrangement will depend upon choice of exposure and outlook, but also upon the way in which it is connected with the interior. If a piazza does not command the best view, or has not sufficient light, or, on the other hand, admits the sun too freely, it will be a perpetual exasperation to its owner, while if it is not easily accessible from the most commonly frequented rooms it will not fulfil its whole purpose. And, again, a want of thought in placing it may needlessly injure the rooms, excluding light and sun where they are most to be desired. In short, the piazza must be considered from the very outset as an integral portion of the house, and at every step in the planning a careful compromise must be made between its claims and those of the interior. Of course, no general rules for its arrangement can be laid down. In some cases there may be but one possible position for it; in others the advantages of a certain exposure or a particularly charming point of view may be of determining weight; and

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in others again there will be a much wider latitude for choice. The only rule is to consider all claims together from the very beginning, and to know clearly which ones, by reason of the habits and tastes of the owners, ought to be most fully met if compromise of any conspicuous kind is necessary.

The claims of certain other external features likewise tell us not to exaggerate our piazzas, and to make them commodious by building them broad rather than long. In a house of the old piazza-encircled type, it was difficult, for instance, to emphasize the chief entrance which, if a house is to have the right home-like air, should always be hospitably prominent; upper balconies, which are often so useful as well as pretty, could not be well placed above the long piazza roofs; terraces were hard to treat, and that delightful feature, the Italian loggia, was impossible, at least on the ground-floor.

Of late we have begun to employ these other external features with the happiest results in the way of comfort no less than in

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the way of beauty. The front door is accentuated by an independent porch, often usefully extended over the driveway. Upper balconies are attached to the chief bedrooms, or thrown out from any window which chances to command a particularly attractive view. Uncovered terraces of turf or stone are formed where needful, and a portion of the piazza itself is often left uncovered, supplying a pleasant place of resort when dull weather or autumn cold renders a roof unnecessary, and a delightful one at night in warmer weather. And loggias are seen in both the lower and the upper stories.

No architectural innovation is more to be commended than the use of the loggia, which may be described as a recessed piazza—a piazza set back into the body of the house, flanked at either end by the walls, and covered by the projection of the upper story. In Italy it does not usually appear on the ground-floor, for there this floor is not devoted to the chief apartments; but its effect is just as good when it is adapted to our own customs of building and living. In

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certain very exposed situations the piazza may well be entirely banished in favor of a loggia ; in others a small open piazza may be effectively supplemented by a larger loggia ; and in almost every country-house at least a little loggia should be introduced either up-stairs or down. Our climate is so very variable that too careful a provision can hardly be made for changing winds and skies and temperatures.

Another useful device is a terrace protected by a trellis over which are trained vines that will soon form a thick summer covering, while in winter their naked boughs will admit light and sun to the rooms behind. Or an awning may be used if its effect is preferred, or if there is danger that the vines will harbor too many mosquitoes. An awning has, indeed, a certain advantage over vines in that it may be rolled back in dark weather, and supported on movable posts which can be taken down in winter. Of course, neither of these expedients really fills the place of a true piazza, for they exclude the sun but not the glare and the rain, and if they are of great extent they de-

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tract from solidity of effect in the house. But a small vine-covered terrace is never inadmissible, and a small awning is rarely offensive ; and they may at least be recommended as supplements to a true piazza, or even as substitutes for it in houses occupied throughout the year, and in positions where a permanent piazza-roof would be a serious inconvenience.

I have said that the pleasing treatment of piazzas is one of the most difficult of current architectural problems. It is true that charming houses with long verandas have been built for generations in certain southern countries. But although we may get valuable hints from them, they cannot be used as models. Ours is not a truly southern climate, but one in which almost tropical heat alternates with almost Siberian cold. Our more complicated habits of life demand more complicated ground-plans than those which serve, for instance, in an Indian bungalow, and every deviation from a simply outlined and low-roofed form makes the right architectural use of piazzas more diffi-

Piazzas

cult. Yet until quite recent years the difficulty of the problem was hardly recognized. No attempt was made so to unite the piazza with the house, in both form and material, that it should seem an integral part of it and not a mere attached shed. Whatever the material of the house, the piazza was built of wood, and it was simply tacked on to the walls without the slightest thought of union. Its roofs had no relation to the roofs of the house, and its forms were very slight and fragile—the jig-saw running riot in a vain effort to adorn it, but no serious effort being made to build it beautifully.

To-day we see a very great change for the better. The piazza is treated—with more or less success, of course—as part and parcel of the house. It is borne by a solid base instead of by isolated posts which allow the cellar walls to be seen, or by a chicken-coop lattice. This base is often continued around the piazza as a parapet, some three feet in height, which has both artistic and practical merit, for it increases solidity and therefore dignity of effect, and it screens the feet of the occupants from the wind, and protects

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them somewhat from the gaze of passers, while interfering not at all with coolness or with freedom of outlook. If the house is of brick or stone the same material is used to build the posts of the piazza, or if wood is employed, simpler and more artistic forms than those of former days are chosen. And it is covered by an outward sweep of the main roof of the house, or by an independent roof which plays an harmonious part in the general outline of the building.

On houses of the revived colonial type the piazza naturally has a flat, balustraded roof which may be utilized as an uncovered balcony for the upper floor, or some parts of which may be roofed-in as upper piazzas. Difficulties are hardly as great, perhaps, when a flat roof can be employed as when a steep one is required by the fashion of the greater roof above. Yet, whatever the scheme, we here and there find instances, in ever-increasing number, where it has been thoroughly well managed. Of course, an ideal degree of success is seldom seen as yet, and many of our new houses are quite as ugly, in their own way, as the

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shed-encircled boxes which preceded them. And they are, perhaps, even more distressing to the mind ; for the old house had at least the merit of frank simplicity, while the new one has often the great demerit of seeming a labored effort after as much eccentricity as possible. Yet, taking good and bad together, the general improvement which has marked our architecture in recent years can nowhere be more clearly read than in our country-homes. And it is a most significant proof of the genuine, vital, and promising character of our progress that these homes should have been so greatly improved, not through imitation of foreign models, but through the development of indigenous fashions, and the incorporation — despite difficulties which might perhaps have been thought insuperable—of the “ vernacular ” piazza.

VII

Formal Flower-Beds

“Let every man, if he likes of these, take what may please his minde, . . . observing this decorum, that according to his ground he do cast out his knots.”

—*John Parkinson.*

“Minute beauties are proper in a spot precluded from great effects.”

—*Thomas Whately.*

VII



FORMAL, "architectural" styles of gardening prevailed all through the western world until about the middle of the last century. It was only in China and Japan, countries then ignored by the European artist, that naturalistic methods of gardening had been developed. But when Pope and Addison had preached the gospel of informality in the surroundings of a home, and when the gardeners of their time had put their ideas into concrete shape, formal gardening fell into total disesteem in Northern Europe. The so-called "natural style," for which the distinctive term landscape-gardening was invented, soon ruled in England so absolutely that hundreds of fine old gardens were destroyed to make room for its innovations, and many magnificent parks were remodelled, even their avenues of stately ancient trees being pitilessly felled.

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On the continent there was a less reckless wish to obliterate the creations of the past, but here too landscape-gardening became the fashion; new places were designed in naturalistic ways, and "English gardens" were added to the old formal parks around royal palace and private château.

Up to the present day landscape-gardening has remained the form of art almost exclusively practised in England, Germany, and France, as well as in this country. But in comparatively recent years there has been a marked revival of a love for certain formal gardening features. We hardly think of laying-out even small gardens in the ways familiar to our far-off ancestors; but we delight to use, in our formal arrangements, the stiff pattern-beds or "knots" which played a conspicuous part in their architectonic designs.

The revival of these beds and borders is sometimes attributed to that fancy for bright-flowered geraniums and pelargoniums which, a generation ago, was so strong that, in England at least, it amounted to a veritable craze; and to the general introduction,

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a little later, of the coleus and other bright-leaved exotic plants. But I think that this view must be mistaken. I think it must be truer to turn the statement about and say that geraniums and coleus-plants became popular because public taste had begun to demand bright-colored and stiff material for a special gardening purpose.

This purpose was part of a generally increasing desire to ornament home-grounds as effectively as possible with the smallest possible expenditure of thought and pains. An immediate result and a showy result—this was the end desired in our gardens; and no way of securing it seemed so seductive as to mass such plants as coleus and geraniums in large bodies so that their vividness of leaf and flower should be brought into strong relief by an expanse of closely cut turf.

The desire thus expressed was not, in itself, very laudable; and the device it seized upon is less satisfactory, even from a purely practical point of view, than it appears to superficial thought. It would be easy to show that the practice of “bedding-out”

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is, in the long run, the costliest and most troublesome which can be adopted for the adornment of a garden, either large or small. But I want to speak simply of the artistic value of the formal pattern-bed. Is it a beautiful thing, or is it an ugly thing?

Like almost everything else in the world, a formal flower-bed is beautiful or ugly according to whether it is itself well designed or badly designed, but especially whether it is in the right place or the wrong place. Even great intrinsic beauty will not save it from condemnation unless it satisfies the broad artistic test of fitness.

Pattern-beds are conspicuously formal—that is, symmetrical and rigid—in outline, and very often in surface, and conspicuously brilliant in color. Therefore, they are intrinsically good when their outlines are agreeable to the eye, and when their colors are harmoniously arranged; and they are appropriate where rigid, symmetrical lines of other sorts accompany them, and where a large spot of vivid color does not strike too loud a note in the general effect of the

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grounds. Under these conditions formal flower-beds are in place; under other conditions they are out of place.

Unfortunately, this is to say that, as we most often see them used, they are decidedly out of place—decidedly injurious to the scene which they are supposed to ornament, and, therefore, ugly things of which no sensitive eye can approve. We constantly see them in grounds which have been laid out according to a naturalistic, unsymmetrical scheme. No position could be worse for a formally outlined bed than one where all the surrounding lines, alike of gravel-walk, of free-growing shrub, and of untrimmed tree, are varied and naturalistic in effect. And no position could be worse for a mass of brilliant color than in the centre of a stretch of bright green, shaven turf. It ruins that air of unity, repose, and breadth which is the real aim when a lawn is created, while the wide carpet of green throws its own colors into such undue relief that it becomes as inartistic as a chromo hung on a strongly tinted wall.

It is not only in small villa-grounds that

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we see formal flower-beds used in this inartistic fashion. There are few large country places in America, or in Europe either, where the lawns are not marred by shrieking spots of color, set down here and there with as little thought of the general impression that the scene will make upon the eye as though a blind man had played gardener. Good cultivators love such beds because they show how skilfully they can grow and trim their plants; and owners love them because—well, I fear simply because they are showier than anything else. And they disfigure our public parks and cemeteries as sadly as our private grounds.

Central Park has been almost altogether preserved from their intrusion, and so has Prospect Park in Brooklyn. But in Chicago parks there are shocking displays of bad taste in this direction; here ordinary pattern-beds have not contented gardeners ambitious to show how cleverly they can use plants grown in forms of wicker or wire to simulate, “in the round,” great arm-chairs and row-boats, garden-gates and rolls of carpet, and even human beings. Doubtless

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these hideous eccentricities could be matched in other places in the West ; and in the East we find at least the ordinary pattern - bed misused in lamentable fashions.

I do not know that the Public Garden in Boston offers the worst instance of this misuse, but it is the one with which I am most familiar. It is a delightfully situated piece of ground, with a gently modulated surface and a pretty sheet of water, and it is well laid out in a naturalistic way. Some of its architectural details are poor, but these would not disturb us much if, year by year, the gardener could be persuaded to restrict his efforts in the way of bedding-out. One-tenth as many bright-hued beds would produce ten times as good an effect. In the centre of the garden there is a straight path which crosses a stone bridge. Along this path and in one or two other places stiff and brilliant beds are appropriate. But everywhere closely set along the edges of the winding paths and near the base of freely grouped trees, and isolated in the centre of stretches of lawn, they ruin the charm of what might be peacefully verdant, genuinely

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naturalistic landscape-pictures. If they were better in color than they are—if the diverse tints which compose them were more tastefully selected and contrasted—they would still be ugly, for they would still be out of place.

We are always told that the public admires them; but popular taste is not a criterion which those who serve our public can yet respect. Our public has seen too few good examples to know, theoretically, what it likes in the way of gardening art. Naturally it likes flowers and bright-hued plants of all kinds. When it sees them as they are shown in the Public Garden, it delights in them for their own sakes while it rarely thinks of the general effect of the place. But if it could once see this place as it ought to look, softly green and quiet, enlivened but not confused by a few touches of brilliant color, I am sure it would recognize the improvement, and not mourn the scores of vanished beds. Even to-day, I think, the people of Boston take more pleasure in the masses of freely flowering plants which adorn the new park-ways on the western

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borders of the city than in the much costlier and showier ornamentation of their Public Garden.

Surely we ought not to go astray so often in so simple a matter as this. Surely it is easy to see that formal flower-beds must be demanded—or at least supported and explained—by some measure of formality in neighboring things. An architectural terrace may be planted with them, although a naturalistic lawn may not; while they cannot look well in the centre of a freely treated park-landscape, they may in some spot, defined by meeting paths, near the line where the flowing features of the park-design meet the symmetrical features of the street; and in very small open spaces in a city, where trees and shrubs could hardly flourish, we might use them much more often than we do. In short, they are artistic whenever they look as though they belonged in the place where they lie; and this leads us to the fact that they are especially artistic when they look as though this place belonged to them—as though it had been pre-

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pared for them and could not rightly be filled with anything else.

I can cite no better example of this effect than the walled garden which lies in front of Charlecote Hall, near Stratford-on-Avon. The Hall is still owned, as it was in Shakespeare's day, by the Lucy family; and as it was built in 1558, six years before Shakespeare's birth, within its walls must have passed his famous interview with Sir Thomas Lucy—if, indeed, the deer-poaching story be counted a true one.

It is a fine big Elizabethan house, and its courtyard* must be one of the few still preserved in England from days when architectural gardens were in highest favor. One side of this forecourt—to use the contemporary term—is made, of course, by the façade of the hall itself. In the centre of its opposite side, facing the portal of the hall, rises a stately gate-house with a large round-arched entrance; and the rest of the enclosure is encircled by walls which are

* I am writing of this courtyard from a photograph taken some years ago. Just how it may look to-day I do not know.

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solid to a height of some five or six feet, and then are finished by an elaborate open-work parapet. How is this formal space arranged? A straight drive leads from the gateway to the Hall, in front of which it spreads into a broad carriage-sweep; and all the remaining space is a formal flower-garden with small pattern-beds of graceful shapes, divided by narrow threads of gravel and forming two large designs, one on either side of the road, which are set off from the road and the carriage-sweep by borders of turf.

If we imagine this rectangular, walled-in space disposed in a naturalistic way, we perceive at once that it would be ineffective in itself and that it would injure the unity of its architectural environment. Now, beyond the garden-walls, freely growing tall trees crowd up closely and proclaim the naturalistic beauties of the encircling park; and their contrast with the architectural charm of the garden makes them seem doubly beautiful, doubly suggestive, while it enhances the charm of the garden itself. Even if the beds in this garden are very

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brightly colored they can hardly look crude or gaudy, for they are not set as spots on a carpet of vivid green. The neutral tones of the gravel and of the encircling walls must subdue the boldest floral notes, if they are rightly grouped, into a general harmony.

But the closely clipped pattern-bed is not the artist's only resource when a certain measure of formality is required by the general character of a spot. There are other flower-beds which are formal yet not so conspicuously formal, and which are bright yet not so gaudily bright.

Some of the smaller pleasure-grounds in Paris are symmetrically planned as a succession of rectangular grass-plots divided by gravelled paths. No scattered beds or isolated plants break the repose of these formal little lawns, but they are encircled, near their edges, by long narrow beds planted with a great variety of hardy shrubs and flowers. The small spaces which surround the sides of the Louvre, at the end toward the church of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, are thus disposed ; so are many parts of the Luxembourg gardens, and of those attached to suburban

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palaces ; and so, on a larger scale, are the beautiful new gardens which lie where the Tuileries palace stood—between the great Tuileries gardens with their ranges of ancient trees, and the paved courtyard of the Louvre.

The flower-beds in these spots, I say, are formal in outline ; but they are merely long simple strips, not true pattern-beds, nor do the plants which fill them grow in patterns. They are disposed with a certain symmetry, but neither disposed nor grown with mathematical precision. Shrubby perennials—standard roses, dwarf standard althæas, and Persian or Chinese lilacs being the favorites—are set at regular intervals along the centre of a bed, its ends or corners being commonly marked by rather taller specimens. Between these, conspicuous plants of lesser height are set, and then the bed is filled to its edges with a varied mass of still lower plants. In August and September I noted, among those of medium size, dahlias of different heights, gladioli, cannas, asters, and bush-daisies ; and, among the low ones, geraniums, heliotropes, tuberous begonias,

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lobelias, candy-tufts, and lantanas, with centaurea, coreopsis, and gaura lindheimeri. These last, which formed the real filling of the bed, were not heterogeneously mingled as isolated specimens, and yet they were not stiffly massed. A little clump of each had been carefully placed with due regard to the habit and color of its neighbors, and then the whole bed had been allowed to grow in free luxuriance. Particularly pretty effects were produced by the mingling of geraniums with red and with white flowers, by the contrast of the red ones with small clusters of white centaurea, and again by the way in which heliotropes and yellow-flowered lantanas had interlocked and intertwined their sprays. The bright blue blossoms of the lobelias had been set where they did not offend the eye by contact with inharmonious hues ; and excellent use had been made of all the white flowers to separate and relieve the brilliant colors. In certain other French towns the grass-plots in gardens of this sort sometimes have a central bed of flowers or foliage-plants, while shrubs are set near their corners ; but I noticed no such in-

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stances in Paris, and the effect is best when the grass furnishes a perfectly quiet background for its gay but not crude or gaudy garland.

Of course the early spring and summer aspect of such borders is different from the aspect I have described ; but it must be equally charming, for then flowering bulbs fill the spaces where the summer flowers are to follow them, and most of the standard shrubs are in blossom. From the artistic point of view these beds are a great deal better, in very many situations, than the best flat and clipped pattern-bed could be ; they are less mechanical in both form and color while distinctly symmetrical in effect, and they show more variety in detail while general harmony is well preserved. The true lover of plants should prefer them, for they allow their furnishings to grow in free development ; they permit the use of an almost endless list of beautiful flowers ; and, discreetly visited by the scissors, they may yield harvests for the adornment of the house. From the practical point of view their superiority is as manifest. The stand-

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ards, of course, are permanent ; there is much less cost for wintering the other plants or sowing or buying them afresh each spring ; and much less labor is needed throughout the summer. Indeed, after the planting or sowing for summer has been done, no care is required but a little weeding and watering, and the occasional clipping of a plant which has run out too far over the grass, or threatens to smother too many of its neighbors.

Such borders are called French parterres, but it will be a pity if their use is long limited to France. Yet must I be careful to say that they too would be unsuitable in naturalistic landscape - designs. Can you fancy them appropriate and lovely if curved around the edges of winding walks, amid irregularly planted shrubs and trees ?

VIII

Formal Gardening

“From the intimate union of art and nature, of architecture and landscape, will be born the best gardening compositions which Time, purifying public taste, now promises to bring us.”

—*Edouard André.*

“A garden is a place arranged for promenades and at the same time for the recreation of the eyes. But it is also an accessory to the house, serving it as an accompaniment, an environment; and, within certain limits, it is simply another apartment, an annex of the house. Therefore, how can the art which built and adorned the dwelling be refused the right to interfere in this exterior house?”

—*Vitét.*

VIII



FROM the beginning of these chapters I have assumed that naturalistic methods of gardening are the most interesting and important to Americans; and this is the truth. But I have implied that even these methods must deal to some extent with formal elements, and also that a consistently formal scheme of design is sometimes better for our use than any other; and these are likewise truths. Indeed, they are truths which we should be at special pains to understand. Our Teutonic blood predisposes us to a more spontaneous and general love for Nature than for art, and thus to a preference for naturalistic rather than architectonic ideals in gardening: we are not likely ever to become so enamoured of formal gardening that we shall turn to it where landscape-gardening would serve us better. The danger lies in the opposite di-

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rection. And, moreover, a true appreciation of the charms of formality would profit our landscape-work itself. Giving us a clearer insight into the true character of each artistic ideal, it would help us to use formal elements well when they are needed in naturalistic work, and to dispense with them altogether when they are needless and therefore inharmonious, inartistic.

Not nearly so many books have been written about gardening as about the sister-arts, yet there is a considerable amount of gardening literature in the English language. Of course even a very true love for inanimate beauty does not imply a spirit necessarily gentle, sane, and sweet in all its manifestations. Yet we cannot believe that men are actually made narrow and unjust by devotion to the most peaceful of the arts—the one which brings them into closest contact with Nature's all-embracing patience, kindness, and serenity, and takes them farthest from the heated arenas where human passions meet and struggle together. And, therefore, it seems strange that more nar-

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rowness and injustice should be revealed in the books which treat of gardening than in those which deal with any of the other arts. In elder days very few writers who advocated either the formal or the naturalistic style could see any merit in the opposite style, and in recent days the case is the same. Several recent books which otherwise would be very useful to the public are rendered positively dangerous by the bitter way in which the words and works, the ideals and processes, of the opposite camp are attacked.

It is worth while, I think, to point this out, for the judgment and taste of a novice may easily be warped forever by the first book on gardening he may chance to take up. It is worth while to say that he must read a good many such books, and check off their contradictory statements one against the other, meanwhile using his own eyes out-of-doors, to arrive at a true understanding of what they teach. This is that each system of design is right in its own place, and that the advocates of each have told a great many cruel untruths about the advocates of the other, or at all events about

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the system which did not happen to be their own. But occasionally we do find a wise and temperate writer who puts the fact of the essential excellence of both styles of gardening into brief, plain words. Mr. Walter Howe, for instance, in the charming introduction to his little book called "The Garden in Polite Literature," tells us that "there are elements of truth in the ideas of both schools which intelligent amateurs and professional men should cherish and utilize whenever and wherever circumstances will permit." And Edouard André, who is chief among the landscape-architects of France to-day, goes still further, in his "Art des jardins," and says, "Three styles may be recognized : the geometrical style, the landscape style, and the composite style. . . . The mixed or composite style results from a judicious mingling of the other two, under favorable conditions ; and, to my mind, it is to this style that the future of gardening art belongs."

In truth, if we use our own minds and eyes, we find no reason to think that formal

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gardening and naturalistic gardening are deadly rivals, each of which must put the knife to the other's throat if it wishes itself to survive. There is no real opposition between the two systems, widely apart though their extreme results may lie.

“Natural gardening” is a term we often hear; but I have tried to avoid it because it is so inexact that it may well move to contumely any lover of the formal styles. No gardening result is natural. At the most it is only naturalistic. “True, behind all the contents of the place sits primal Nature, but Nature ‘to advantage dressed,’ Nature in a rich disguise, Nature delicately humored, stamped with new qualities, furnished with a new momentum, led to new conclusions, by man’s skill in selection and artistic concentration. . . . Man has taken the several things and transformed them; and in the process they passed, as it were, through the crucible of his mind to reappear in daintier guise; in the process, the face of Nature became, so to speak, humanized; man’s artistry conveyed an added charm. . . . A garden is man’s tran-

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script of the woodland world ; it is common vegetation ennobled—outdoor scenery neatly writ in man's small hand. It is a sort of twin-picture, conceived of man in the studio of his brain, painted upon Nature's canvas with the aid of her materials. . . . It is Nature's rustic language made fluent and intelligible ; Nature's garrulous prose tersely recast — changed into imaginative shapes, touched to finer issues."

These are John Sedding's words, written by an architect, and printed in a book which has for its main purpose to exalt formal gardening and to decry the "so-called landscape-gardener" as a person who is not an artist at all, but a mere helpless, aimless meddler with Nature, professing to do work exactly like Nature's, and, of course, always failing in the attempt. But this book is one of those which most grievously misrepresent the true ideals, methods, and results of landscape-gardening, however faithful may be its pictures of what the actual professors of the art to-day achieve in England ; and I have delighted to emphasize the fact by quoting this one passage as an admirable

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description of genuine landscape - arrangements—as essentially inappropriate to any formal arrangement.

In a true formal garden the canvas is not Nature's and does not profess to be, while in the naturalistic garden it may be Nature's, and, if not, must look as though it might have been. In a formal garden the language is not a refinement of Nature's, but a translation of it into quite another tongue. In a formal garden Nature is not delicately humored, but boldly compelled in a direction opposite to any of those which she ever chooses. A formal garden is not man's transcript of the woodland world, but a wholly new conception based on architectural knowledge and elaborated by architectural taste. It is as artificial, almost, as a building; for, although its materials are Nature's, so are the stones of a cathedral; and Nature shows us nothing at all resembling it, either in fundamental idea or in finished effect.

On the other hand, Mr. Sedding has exactly and beautifully painted such scenes as we may see in Central Park. They are not

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natural scenes, but they are naturalistic, in idea as well as in effect. Suggestions and hints for them may be found in wild Nature, although no patterns. They speak to the mind in Nature's language, although more clearly and exquisitely than she ever speaks herself. No study of architecture could have taught a man how to conceive them, and no degree of architectural taste could have enabled him to perfect them. Nature was this artist's school-master, and not merely the store-keeper from whom he bought raw materials to be treated after methods of his own inventing. If no scenes like this existed in Mr. Sedding's England, nothing to show him a true original for his charming verbal picture, the fault did not lie, as he thought, at the door of landscape-gardening; it should be laid to the fact that no real artist had practised landscape-gardening in the regions he explored.

But the kind of art which he did love is also worthy of our love, and it is time that we loved and understood it better. It is not, as we are apt to think, a kind which cramps an artist within narrow bor-

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ders, which limits him to creations that are all alike, either in idea or in effect. The hill-side garden of Italy, with its terraces and balustrades, stairways, grottos, and statues, and its rich masses of freely growing foliage, contrasting harmoniously with these artificial features, is formal, architectonic, in aim and aspect. Formal is the vast level park at Versailles, with its magnificent straight alleys of trees, its big rectangular basins of water, its stately fountains and wide gravelled spaces — splendid outdoor drawing-room that it was for a pompous king and his courtiers. But formal, too, is the park at Dijon which also Le Nôtre designed, where a straight avenue runs through the centre, and narrower ones radiate from it to the drive which encircles the boundary, but where the whole of the remaining space is a free-growing forest, traversed by winding footways of turf. The old Dutch garden was formal, with its trees and shrubs clipped into fantastic shapes, and its puerile, toy-like ornamentation ; but so also was the great walled garden of old English days, symmetrically arranged and partly planted

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in stiff fashions, but partly given up to more naturalistic "heaths"—the garden that Bacon described and that Evelyn loved. An enclosed courtyard laid out with gravel and beds of flowers, like the one at Charlecote Hall, is formal, of course; but so too are the small Parisian * pleasure-grounds set with French parterres, and so too was your grandmother's garden in New England, with its irregular masses of flowers, but its straight walks and prim little edgings of box. Some of these types are more formal, more architectural, than others, but in none of them has Nature been delicately humored; in all of them a non-naturalistic ideal has been expressed by non-naturalistic methods of arrangement.

We can thus draw a line between the one great gardening style and the other. But we should feel that it is not a rigid line. The borders of the two styles overlap, if not as regards fundamental conceptions, yet as regards details of execution. Nature must be allowed her freedom to some extent, even where all the trees are clipped,

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all the grass is shorn, and all the flowers are set in pattern-beds. Within the prescribed shapes and lines she must grow her flowers and foliage as she will; and she must supply light and shadow and the atmospheric envelope. And, on the other hand, artificial, formal elements must enter into every landscape which man's foot is to tread and man's eye is to enjoy as a work of art. We must always have roads and paths and the non-natural curbs or edges of grass which they imply. In private grounds we have a house as the very centre and focus of the scene, as the very reason for its artistic treatment; and in public parks we have minor buildings, bridges, steps, and many other artificial preparations for human comfort. No garden can be absolutely artificial, and none can be absolutely natural; and this is enough to show that the elements theoretically proper to the one style may sometimes be very freely introduced in a general scheme which we class as belonging to the other style.

There is, for instance, a beautiful park near the city of Dresden. It is about a

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mile in length, and in its centre stands a charming seventeenth-century palace, with one of its fronts looking out on a rectangular sheet of water, and the other on a flower-beset lawn of similar extent and size, while from pond and lawn to the entrances of the park stretch wide straight roads, bordered by paths on either side and planted with regular rows of tall linden-trees and horse-chestnuts. Similar roads and paths likewise cut through the centre of the park in the opposite direction, and thus we have a scheme which is fundamentally formal. But the other portions of the ground are treated in more naturalistic ways. Great forest-like masses of trees and shrubs often come up so close behind the avenue trees that from the avenue we can hardly imagine what lies beyond them. Winding paths traverse these naturalistic plantations, and now and then we find large open glades where splendid oaks and elms stand in half-rural solitude. As originally designed, more than two hundred years ago, this park was smaller and entirely formal; but it has been improved, not defaced, by the additions and

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alterations of later years. The transition from formality to informality has everywhere been so skilfully managed that there is no want of harmony in the scenes through which we pass. The free park-like charm of some of them merely seems refreshing in contrast with the architectonic dignity of those we have just left ; or, if we come first upon the naturalistic parts, they merely accent the impressiveness of those which encircle or lead up to the palace.

For an example of an opposite sort we may look once more at our Central Park. Here is a distinctly naturalistic scheme. No large pleasure-ground, encircled by city streets, could be less formal in general idea, more rural in general effect. Yet its chief feature is the Mall—a wide straight walk, symmetrically planted with rows of elm-trees, and ending upon an architectural terrace with flights of stairs descending to the plaza at the edge of the lake. Nothing in the park is more beautiful than the harmonious contrast we note when, standing on this terrace, we look in one direction down the formal Mall, and in the other across the

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water to the naturalistic opposite shore of the lake.

Each of these prospects gains in charm by its artistic opposition to the other ; and even when we are far away from the terrace, the Mall plays a necessary part in the scene. It was needed in such a park to accommodate great crowds of pedestrians ; and what is needed in a park must, if skillfully introduced, increase its beauty by increasing the force and truth of its expression. The Mall gives just the one strong touch of confessed art which was required, in the centre of this big naturalistic pleasure-ground, to prove that it is a public pleasure-ground and not a stretch of pastoral country or a private domain with an excessive number of roads and paths. It was needed to emphasize the artistic character of the general scheme, and to prepare the eye for such other formalities and artificialities as are required in a much frequented public resort. It says in unmistakable accents that the whole scheme is non-natural ; that the purpose of the neighboring landscape-pictures is not to make people believe that they

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are in the country, but merely to suggest the country ; not to assume rusticity, but to typify it ; not to affect naturalness, but to be craftily, carefully, poetically naturalistic.

The Thiergarten in Berlin is probably the finest naturalistic urban park in all Europe. Some of its portions are wilder-looking, more distinctly naturalistic, than any parts of Central Park. But through its whole breadth runs a wide formal space, with straight drives and walks, richly adorned with works of sculpture, and appropriately planted. And so it always must be : useful, and therefore artificial, features are required in all pleasure-grounds, now of a large and bold and again of a less obtrusive sort ; and the franker the expression of their purpose, the better as a rule the result will be.

We do not yet realize the fact, but when grounds are small the formal style, in some of its phases, is more easily managed than the naturalistic. And this is not the only reason why I wish that it were more often attempted by American hands.

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We are not likely to have in America many country houses so large and stately that they would justify a return to the grand ideals of Le Nôtre—that they would look beautiful and appropriate surrounded by vast formal parks. Nor are such parks suited to American rural surroundings, to the ideals of a democratic nation, or to the manners of living of even our idlest and wealthiest people. But the great excuse for a formal manipulation of Nature's materials is, we know, the dominance of other formal elements in the given locality ; and this fact proves that formal gardening may rightly be applied to our smallest types of pleasure-ground, although it would be unsuited to our largest types. In many American towns, and many American summer colonies of cottages or villas, formal gardens might produce a very beautiful effect, and a very much more appropriate effect than is now achieved by our attempts at landscape-gardening on a miniature scale.

In a really rustic colony where the houses are very simple and the character of the encircling landscapes has not been much al-

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tered from its virginal estate, a formal garden, no matter how small and modest, would be too palpably artificial. We should not want to see even the old New England doorway, with its box-bordered beds, reproduced on a Catskill mountain-side, under the shade of ancient hemlocks, with a panorama of wild woodland scenery showing beyond it; nor, again, in front of a rough seaside cottage, on the edge of a beach with its fringe of wild-growing shrubs and creepers and flowers. But would formal gardens of this, or even of a much more boldly architectural kind, be unfitting in the main streets of our little towns, in the outlying villa-streets of our towns of the second and the third class, along the fine boulevards of big detached houses which are characteristic of many of our great Western cities, or in luxurious summer-resorts like Newport?

At Newport especially I have often wished that someone—architect, owner, or gardener—had had the wit to see how charming and how individual he might make his domain by some formal method of treatment. Of course I do not speak of the

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larger estates which are being established toward the rocky end of the promontory, or of the more spacious of the grounds which front upon the avenues. But scores of Newport houses which are called cottages, but in reality are large and sometimes very pompous villas or even mansions, stand in very small grounds, and here some degree of formality certainly seems desirable. Here architecture certainly dominates the general picture, and if the grounds are to be appropriate and to assert their own importance they may well be given an architectonic character.

What are such grounds to-day? If some measure of taste has illumined their guardians, they are, perhaps, green little lawns cut by one or two lines of gravel and encircled by naturalistic groups of trees and shrubs. Then they are pretty in themselves, but not dignified enough, not consciously artistic enough—I may say, not artificial enough—to befit their service as adjuncts to a large costly house and as foregrounds over which, from the house, one sees the rigid lines of the street and the

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symmetrical forms of neighboring buildings.

But most often no taste at all has presided over their disposition, except a greedy love for conspicuous plants as such ; and then they are hideous as well as inappropriate. They are huddled little conglomerations of trees and showy shrubs, and of bits of grass splashed with chromo-like flower-beds, and speckled with exotic plants which have recently been brought from the greenhouse and loudly confess their homesickness for tropical surroundings. Most often we feel that the owner's or the gardener's one desire has been to get as much variety as he could within his narrow limits. As a result he has entirely lost the unity which alone can give relief and value to variety. His garden has no coherence, no character ; it is a place in which plants are grown, but not a place which as a whole makes any impression upon the eye, except to confuse and pain it. Nowhere better than at Newport can we understand what a French artist meant when he said that most people's idea of gardening is "the cleaning up of spon-

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taneous vegetation" followed by "the accumulation of strange and dissimilar objects." Most people, in truth, go to work in their gardens as they would in their houses if they should bring in a bric-à-brac dealer's stock and arrange it after the method which prevailed in his shop. Such a house would not be fit to live in, and the majority of our small gardens are not fit to look at.

Nor is true variety evident when, in a place like Newport, we pass a long series of gardens in review. How little their owners really care about them, or even about the plants they contain, is clearly proved not only by their lack of design, but by their perpetual repetition of the same small list of showy plants and flowers. Inside their houses these people want an artistic general scheme, worked out with details which shall not be exactly the same as their neighbors'. Outside they care nothing at all for any scheme, and want, apparently, to show that they are in the fashion by having precisely the same furnishings as the man next door.

It would be pleasant indeed if a formally

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disposed garden sometimes met the eye among these would-be naturalistic gardens ; or, to speak more exactly, among these gardens which reveal no desire to follow any style that can be fitted with a name—which are merely irregular in the worst meaning of the word. Whatever the designer's success might be in bringing beauty out of his formal scheme, the result would show at least that he had had some scheme in mind, some plan, some intention, some definite idea ; and where good results are almost entirely lacking, even a visible good intention excites approval.

Where villa-grounds are large enough to demand a drive-way to the door, a straight avenue symmetrically bordered by trees might often advantageously replace the road which now winds about on level soil simply because someone has thought curves always essential, and which therefore cuts up the space without the excuse of either increased usefulness or increased beauty. Such an avenue would imply, of course, some measure of formality in its immediate neighbor-

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hood ; but farther away the design might gradually pass into informality, until a naturalistic plantation of shrubs should encircle the boundaries and mask all but the most desirable points of outlook from the house.

In smaller grounds a more consistently formal scheme would often be appropriate—some truly architectural arrangement of trees and shrubs and flower-beds. And there are spots in Newport where an artist would hardly object even if the trees and shrubs were clipped to symmetrical shapes. In the very smallest grounds one or two trees near the house or the gate might suffice, and the whole of the ground be given up to a formal flower-garden, either with plots of grass and French parterres, as in the little parks of Paris, or with freely growing flowers in rectangular box-edged borders, after the old colonial scheme, or even with carpet-bedding carefully designed and consistently employed, as in the courtyard of Charlecote Hall—a background of gravel being preferable then to the background of grass which usually throws the vivid colors of such beds into undue relief. Very small

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rectangular grounds thus turned into flower-gardens would often be more appropriate to their situation than even the best attempts at naturalistic gardening on a tiny scale ; and they would also give more delight to their owners, if any true love for flowers resides in their breasts. Where one has not room for a genuine landscape-picture, or where such a picture does not harmonize with what lies around it, are we not foolish to neglect the beauty which artistic arrangements of flowers alone can give ?

Even without flowers or spreading shrubs a very small bit of ground can be made attractive. Nothing is prettier, when its surroundings justify it, than a close, graceful pattern wrought in lines of box or some similar plant, with a stretch of gravel for a background, and some accentuation in the way of formally shaped shrubs like Irish yews and pyramidal junipers. And, as I have said before, flower-gardens and places for collections of specimen plants will sometimes be desired. If the main grounds are naturalistically arranged, they should be put where they will not injure the general

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picture ; and if they are thus set apart a formal method of arrangement will agreeably contrast with the informality around it, and will be most convenient also.

But I do not want to attempt to lay out gardens at Newport or anywhere else. I only want to show that more kinds of gardens may be appropriate and beautiful than our very vague and crude philosophy has yet taught us to dream about.

A professed landscape-gardener—I cannot say it too often—will almost invariably be needed when a naturalistic scheme of any extent is desired ; but every architect ought to be able to design a small formal garden, and every gardener ought to be able to develop it. Neither the average American architect nor the average American gardener has this power to-day ; but that is merely because neither of them has learned his own trade properly. Every architect ought to know something about the requirements of the surroundings of a home, but few of ours even know how to choose its site reasonably well. Every gardener ought to know at

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least the rudiments of the art of combining lines, masses, and colors ; but most of ours merely know how to make plants take root and flourish.

Especially should we gain in our large cities if the architect who does public work took an interest in gardening and were allowed to express it. Now, when a fine public building fronts on a little park, this is usually left as it may have chanced to remain from the time when it was a private garden or a bit of the fields ; or, if it is rearranged, the effort is to make it look like a fragment of a landscape. And when the open space is smaller it is left as plain turf, or is dotted with purposeless single plants and scarred with loud isolated beds of coleus. Greater beauty, greater dignity, a truer expression of the purpose of the spot as a forecourt to an important structure, might usually be attained by the use of consistently formal or of semi-formal arrangements. And often we see city spaces where a flower-garden would indisputably be the best device.

All people like flowers, and no one loves

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them better than the poorest people in our largest towns. This fact is always cited in excuse for the defacement of naturalistic designs, like the Boston Public Garden, with a multitude of flower-beds; and it is a fact against which intelligent lovers of our great urban parks must perpetually fight lest their pastoral scenes be similarly ruined. But it is not a fact against which we should always fight; rather, it is one which should be gladly accepted and carefully considered by the guardians of our public grounds. Wherever a flower-garden can appropriately be made within crowded city limits, there, I am sure, one should be made; and not only for the sake of the people's delight, but also for the sake of the integrity of the naturalistic parks. If we had in New York a proper place for a fine floral display, no one would have an excuse for demanding, as some people continually do, that there should be more flower-beds in Central Park. Such a spot as the little triangle where Broadway and Sixth Avenue meet—which now shows a bit of grass, one ragged pine-tree, two or three straggling bushes, and a hideously

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shaped bed of coleus—would look extremely well if consistently planted with flowers. And when the old reservoir on Fifth Avenue is removed, we should have in its place, not a mere extension of Bryant Park, but a beautiful big garden, with formal avenues of trees to give shade, a balustraded walk around its confines, a large ornamental fountain, and a rich array of flower-beds, charmingly changing their aspect as the months advance, and telling to those who never leave the streets how, in the country, Flora is marshalling “the procession of the flowers.”

There can be no American city where spots similar to these do not actually cry aloud for formal treatment of some sort. And there are one or two American cities where the charm of formal or semi-formal arrangements has already been shown. In Baltimore, for instance, when one stands in Mount Vernon Place, or on the adjacent wide sloping street where central plantations are enlivened by the perpetual sound of falling water, one can hardly believe he is in our crude young America, so finished and

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artistic is the scene, so eminently appropriate as the central feature of a large town, so restful and dignified in its architectonic simplicity.

And there is even more than this to be said in behalf of formal gardening. When a stately house is surrounded by a large naturalistic park there is sometimes a look of incompleteness, of disharmony, no matter how skilfully the planter may have worked near the house-walls and around their base. Certain English writers tell us that a house ought never to stand thus in close contact with informally arranged grounds — that there ought always to be a symmetrical garden in front of it, or at least some arrangement of terraces and regular plantations. And others, of course, say just the reverse, finding their ideal in those English mansions whose walls rise straight and simple from encircling lakes of turf.

Truth lies, once more, between these two extremes. Sometimes architectonic design is evidently needed in the grounds adjoining the house; but sometimes unity and

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harmony of effect can be complete without it, and its introduction would ruin the place. The only right theory is that no theory is always right—that good sense and good taste must dictate the specially appropriate solution for each special problem.

I may say, however, that as a rule American country houses of the typical kind do not need terraces as much as they are needed by the characteristic English house. Our piazzas play, to a great extent, the rôle of architectural terraces. Once, we know, they were merely elongated sheds and had little artistic significance of any kind. But to-day, with their foundations of brick or stone, their parapets or balustrades, and their dignified flights of steps, they are really covered terraces, and may enable us often to dispense with an actual terrace where otherwise it would be essential.

If our architects fully understood their opportunities they would naturally decide such points as these. But the Capitol at Washington is a striking instance of the fact that a landscape-architect may have a

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keener vision, a truer artistic sense, than they. It was not an architect, it was Mr. Olmsted, who first saw how greatly the Capitol, on the side which faces the city, might be improved by the addition of a wide and high architectural terrace. The beauty of the building itself has been much increased by this terrace, which adds to its apparent height and thus betters its proportions; and it is now integrally united by the terrace to the sloping gardens which stretch away in front of it.

What has been done here might with corresponding advantage be done to some large country houses that I happen to remember, while I know others that would be utterly spoiled if the simple way in which their foundations rise from the soil were disturbed by terracing, or by formal arrangements of any sort. There is no rule—there are only principles; and these principles only an artist who knows something of both architecture and gardening is likely to apply with justness. No definite ideal can be cherished, to the exclusion of others, by a person who wants to produce good results upon canvases

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where Nature has prepared for his work. Each and every new problem needs new consideration. Each, as André says, “needs individual taste, the touch of the artist, who should above all be guided by art, and who often will have to struggle against the exactions of his client and against his own tendency to give free course to that will-o’-the-wisp which is so difficult to fetter—the imagination.”

And Emerson tells us the same thing in his own trenchant fashion: “It is best to pay in your land a skilful gardener, or to buy good sense applied to gardening.” We shall never be well served by theories that this style is right and this is wrong, that one method of treatment or one kind of feature is beautiful, and other methods, other features, are inartistic. We shall be well served only by good sense, taking account of particular local facts, and based upon principles which themselves are based upon the same great laws that direct intelligent effort in all the other arts. Simplicity, harmony, appropriateness, variety in unity—clear expressions of clearly conceived and

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fitting schemes—these are the results to be desired in our parks and country homes as in our pictures, our statues and our city houses.

IX

A Word for Architecture

“All is fine that is fit.”

IX



AMERICANS are gradually learning that fitness, appropriateness, is the foundation of all artistic excellence ; and though the lesson is not yet fully acquired, we are making visible progress toward the realization of this quality in our various classes of buildings. The improvement is perhaps most manifest in our country houses, which we design with a more intelligent regard for the requirements of site and environment than we did even ten years ago, and a truer sense of the fact that in such houses simplicity is a cardinal virtue. There has been a reaction against conventionality on the one hand and against ostentation on the other, and it has been inspired by a new-born feeling for architectural fitness.

But in a reaction men are almost certain to go too far, and so it is not surprising to find that in trying for simplicity we some-

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times fall into rudeness. This shows, of course, that we have not fully understood the meaning of fitness as an architectural term; we have remembered that a structure should harmonize with its surroundings, but have forgotten that it should also harmonize with the spirit of cultivated men and women who are the heirs of all the ages, living in a state of high civilization, and inheriting the practical processes as well as the tastes of countless generations of skilful builders. And thus, moreover, we have often missed even true simplicity; for civilized, intelligent men can produce rude-looking structures only by an effort so deliberate and self-conscious that it lays them open to the charge of affectation.

No one need object to an Adirondack camp, a fishing-lodge, or a hill-side studio, if it is rough and rude. It is designed as a shelter for a semi-civilized sort of existence, and may be as appropriate to the temporary needs of its inhabitants as to the wild scenes amid which it stands. But when costly buildings in civilized neighbor-

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hoods are constructed for permanent use in imitation of the materials and methods naturally adopted for temporary homes in the wilderness or for pioneers' cabins, neither the interests of true simplicity nor those of true appropriateness are served.

The tendency to which I refer finds many illustrations in the use of bowlders or roughly cut stones in constructions which should wear a refined and dignified as well as a simple aspect. Undoubtedly, this practice has been largely inspired by the example of Richardson. An architect so original, strong, and skilful as he, could not fail to influence profoundly the general course of his art; and, as with every great master, this influence has been partly for good, partly for evil. No other small building in this country has been so often described, pictured, and discussed as the gardener's lodge which he built, of huge rough bowlders, in the village of North Easton, near Boston. It is, indeed, a picturesque and interesting piece of work, but it has certainly been imitated in ways which Richardson never anticipated, and he would certainly have been dis-

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tressed by a sight of the progeny it has engendered.

In certain places and for certain purposes the use of bowlders, whether large or small, is not only allowable but praiseworthy. It is both sensible and appropriate to use them, for example, in the foundations or the basement of a country house on land where they abound and can be had at little cost and trouble. But even in such spots as this it is seldom desirable that a house should be wholly built of them, for we do not want an American country home to wear the unrefined and ponderous aspect which the unalloyed employment of them gives.

In other parts of the country one may wisely use, instead of bowlders and for a similar purpose, stones roughly split from neighboring granite-ledges ; but, again, and for the same reasons, it is seldom well thus to construct an entire house. We want simplicity and we want solidity, but we do not want coarseness or the affectation of simplicity. A house with an interior such as every American demands, made comfortable by a hundred ingenious devices, and beauti-

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ful by the skilled work of a score of different artisans, should have an exterior of consonant expression ; and rough-hewn stones or roughly cemented bowlders cannot give this expression.

But it is not only in country homes that our methods of using stone are often erroneous. Country churches and public buildings, and even the most ambitious city structures, frequently prove bad taste in this respect. Even in urban parks an exaggerated effort to adapt the architectural work to rural surroundings is a departure from genuine simplicity. A park is one of the most complicated and elaborate of artistic creations ; and its unity and beauty are impaired if any feature fails to show the same kind and degree of skill and refinement as are shown by those which accompany it. No matter how rural in character a park may be, or how pure and undisturbed the sylvan charm of some of its remoter parts, there is no place where all the work of man ought to be done with greater care, more perfect finish, or, very often (using

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the term in its best sense), a franker artificiality.

Almost all work is done in this manner in our parks. Their driveways are not constructed like country roads of even the better sort ; their lawns are not left as fields of untended grass ; nor are their shrubberies allowed to grow with the wild luxuriance which is so beautiful beside a rural highway. The engineer and the horticulturist show, in our parks, the highest level to which modern science and art have attained, and the architect should work in a spirit similar to theirs. Structures which look rough, casual, almost barbaric, and affectedly simple, are not appropriate in a carefully tended pleasure-ground planted with exotic trees and flowers, and bisected by scientifically built and neatly curbed roads, even though we may know that as much thought and pains have been spent on their construction as if the outcome had been more patently artistic and refined.

Central Park was laid out before the present taste for boulders and rough-hewn stones had developed, and in it one may study the

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right methods of treating the architectural features of such a spot. Here and there, in quiet corners and shady nooks, we find rough little flights of steps and rustic summer-houses of unhewn wood; but in all conspicuous places, and for all important constructions, work of a more polished and artificial sort is employed. But in the new Franklin Park at Boston, for example, there are structures in the most prominent situations which would seem more appropriate in a woody glen, miles away from any town. A drinking-fountain, carefully built of jagged stones to look as if carelessly thrown together for a temporary purpose, may have a beauty of its own; but it is not fitly placed beside the principal building and near the principal driveway of an urban park. And steps of rude slabs, scarcely revealing the touch of the chisel, do not seem appropriate in contact with the accurately shaped and smoothed curbing of such a drive.

In building the gateways at the principal entrance to this beautifully designed pleasure-ground, the aim seems to have been to make

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them inconspicuous, and thus to disturb as little as possible the rural effect of the outlook from neighboring higher points over the distant country. But the existence of gateways, and their eminently artificial character, cannot be disguised; and to build them wholly of small bowlders and drape them as thickly as possible with foliage, is to sacrifice art and appropriateness to an unattainable end. A comparison of these gateways with those recently erected at one of the southern entrances to Prospect Park would prove, I think, that the more confessedly artistic such works of art are made, the better is their effect.

Under the Propylæa of the Athenians one entered, not a park, but a small enclosure thickly filled with buildings and statues. But through and over it he who stood on the Acropolis saw lovely stretches of open country and a magnificent panorama of sea and island-shores. Would this have looked better, do you think—would it have looked more beautiful or even more rural—had the stately range of chiselled columns been replaced by a picturesque “rustic” construc-

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tion of rough stones covered with vines? Of course I do not want to draw too close a comparison. A park is not a temple-enclosure; the landscape near Athens is not like the landscape near Boston; and he who looks from the Acropolis toward Salamis is not in the same mood as he who stands on a picturesque height and looks over Massachusetts fields and hills. But when a rule in art is fundamental, it holds good for broad application in all parts of the world and in all kinds of work. I think it is a fundamental rule that, while the art which really conceals art may be great, the art which tries to conceal what cannot be concealed is always mistaken. And architectural features cannot be concealed, cannot be made to look naturalistic, as may an artist's manipulation of ground-surfaces, water-borders, and plantations.

Even for bridges rough, unhewn stones are now often used, and in bridges they are particularly inappropriate. How can an arch look well when it does not look stable? And how can it look stable when its vous-

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soirs are of irregular shapes and unequal lengths, so that they appear less to be bracing up than to be sliding past each other? Richardson's idea of the way in which a bridge in a naturalistically treated pleasure-ground ought to be built is shown by the one that carries Boylston Street across the Fens in Boston. It is a large bridge and entirely devoid of ornament—perfectly plain and simple above and below. But the wide, graceful, sinewy sweep of its arch, its beautifully modelled buttresses and coping, and the well-regulated shape and carefully finished surface of all its stones, make it as true and refined and as noteworthy a work of art as any of the more elaborate things that Richardson ever built. Indeed, if I were asked to point out a quite perfect piece of Richardson's handiwork, I think I should point to this bridge. Not far away from it stands another bridge, with three arches, built in the now prevalent "rustic" manner. In general design it is very good, and were its fabric as architectural and its finish as perfect as its neighbor's, the two would form a most happy contrast. But

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now it looks weak despite its actual solidity, and careless despite the very careful study that must have been bestowed upon it.

All over the country we find, in street and park and private country-place, hundreds of architectural things which lack the merits of this bridge and have more than its defects. Many of them, so pronounced has been the effort to secure simplicity, seem to take us back to the very infancy of art, when there were not even steel tools to work with, but only hatchets of bronze. But of course they do not strike us as simple; of course we do not believe for a moment that this was the most natural way for their builders to work. They strike us as excessively sophisticated, self-conscious, affected. They are not protests against over-elaboration. They are—in effect if not in intention—elaborate protests against the existence of architecture as an art.

X

Out-Door Monuments

“A statue in a garden is to be considered as one part of a scene or landscape.”

—*Shenstone.*

X



THREE questions suggest themselves when we look at a monument which stands in a public park or square or street : Does the person or event commemorated deserve such conspicuous and lasting honor ? Is the monument excellent as a work of art ? And is it so placed that it appears to the best advantage itself, and increases the beauty of its surroundings ?

If our public places are to be fittingly adorned, two of these questions should be carefully considered every time that an outdoor monument is proposed. The first, I think, may be left to take care of itself. Public monuments, at least in this country, are not likely to be decreed to persons or causes unworthy of respect. And if some are set up to record the existence of men in whom the public at large feels little interest, we need not object to their presence for this

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reason alone. If a work of art is agreeable to look upon, we may be glad to possess it even if it commemorates a well-meaning nobody.

But the question of artistic excellence is very important, and not only from the purely artistic point of view. A bad work of art bearing the name of a great man degrades his memory, persistently imprinting upon the people's mind a weak or false or grotesque idea of him. Who can be won to admiration of the poet by the contorted, ridiculous figure at the entrance of the Mall in Central Park, which bears the name of Burns? Or who can gain a fresh sense of the service which Seward rendered the Republic by contemplating his statue on Madison Square? But Farragut is really commemorated, really honored, by the figure which stands not far away from the Seward. Each time we pass it we think with gratitude and admiration of him, while we receive an impression of pleasure from the sight of the work of art as such. Nor need it be thought that the humblest among

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the people are blind and deaf to the difference, in aspect and message, between such works as these two. Hundreds of persons of all classes daily stop to study the Farragut statue, while, if we watch at the other end of the park, we find that scarcely a glance is ever directed to the Seward. St. Gaudens's statue of Lincoln not only adorns the city of Chicago and teaches its people what sculptor's work should be, but helps to interpret the greatest of Americans to generations that never knew him. It is impossible to think that it will not have great influence upon the conscience and patriotism of the youth of Chicago. But will the youth of New York profit much by the Lincoln statue on Union Square? And who has ever cared to inform himself about Bolivar after seeing his grotesque equestrian figure in Central Park?

The proportion of bad monuments to good ones in any American city to-day is probably at least ten to one; and the collective effect of so many poor works in deforming our public places, and discouraging,

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if not corrupting, the popular love of art, can hardly be over-estimated. It is worth while, therefore, to try to discover some of the reasons why our monuments are so seldom good.

They might, as a rule, be much more successful but for a common mistake in their first conception—a mistake against which intelligent sculptors have long protested in vain. Nine times out of ten a full-length figure is insisted upon when a bust, or an architectural monument with a fitting inscription and, perhaps, a portrait-head in relief, would be all-sufficient and, indeed, distinctly more appropriate. This perpetual demand for full-length figures works in two ways against the sculptor's success.

In the first place, the average of physical dignity and beauty in our race is not very high ; many men since St. Paul have been weak in their bodily presence, although giants in intellectual and moral ways ; and since the time of St. Paul there has been a great change for the worse in masculine costume, judged from the artist's point of view. The modern portrait-sculptor has fallen upon

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hard times ; why make his trouble greater by insisting that he shall portray the whole body in cases where not the body but the mind of the man is what we really wish to commemorate ?

In the second place, it is as difficult in cases such as this to evolve an appropriate conception of a full-length figure as to execute it beautifully when it is found. Unless a man's physical presence has been prominently associated with his service to the public, how shall it be posed and presented so as to express any clear and dignified idea ? The broad rule seems to be that a man of action should be portrayed at full length, standing or mounted as the case may be, and that, for men who have labored rather with the brain alone than with brain and body together, a seated figure is sometimes desirable, while, most often, a portrait of the head alone will suffice. No one would be satisfied with a figure of Sherman except on horseback ; a bust of Farragut could never have expressed him as does our bold quarter-deck figure ; nor could a great orator be fully characterized except as standing upon

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his feet. But we can fancy a chief-justice, for example, best portrayed in a sitting posture ; and it might seem as though this were the natural aspect to choose for Lincoln did not the Chicago statue prove that a great artist may see deeper than ordinary mortals, and, working more boldly than they might counsel, may treat his theme more clearly and fully. In this monument the chair of State behind the figure explains one phase of Lincoln's service, while the erect yet reflective pose of the figure declares that the man who filled this chair was a great orator upon occasion, and was not only the people's executive but their leader in a crisis demanding energetic action.

Thus we see that two things should be considered in the conception of a monument : We should reflect upon the character of the services rendered by its subject, and also upon the bodily presence Providence bestowed upon him, and then decide whether a statue, a bust, or some still less personal kind of memorial should be chosen. A bust of Holmes or Whittier would be much better than a statue ; but this fact

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does not decide matters for all literary men. Think, for instance, of Carlyle. His more strongly marked personality, more energetic cast of mind, needed to be shown—as they are in the seated statue near his old home at Chelsea—through a rendering of his tall, gaunt form and voluminous cloak. An intelligent artist will not find it hard to decide this question of appropriateness in the scheme of monuments ; but, unfortunately, the artist is often the person who has the least to say about it.

Even in the interests of mere variety we might well wish for a wider difference in the conception of our monuments. But to bring it about in satisfactory ways we must depend less exclusively than hitherto upon the art of sculpture. When a sculptor designs a group or figure an architect should give it a fitting pedestal. Those who have seen the Chicago Lincoln know how vastly the effect of the figure is increased by the bold yet quiet and dignified character of the sub-structure, excellently adapted not only to the figure itself but to the chosen site ; and

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a large part of the impressiveness of the Farragut in Madison Square depends upon the size and ornamentation of its base, although, from the architectural point of view, the design is not as good as it ought to be. But very poor or very inappropriate bases are still the rule—bases designed by men who may be good sculptors but have no architectural knowledge, or left to the discretion of the persons who supply the stone.

Occasionally we even see an instance of their total abolition, in curious disregard of that fundamental rule which mere common-sense might teach, and which says that a work of art must always be confessed and emphasized as such. In Central Park Mr. Kemys's fine figure of an American panther crouching for its spring is set, without any pedestal, on the top of a vine-covered rock overhanging the driveway. I believe this was done against the sculptor's protest ; and certainly no true artist would sanction so puerile an effort to pretend that a bronze figure is a living animal. Again, on the Gettysburg battle-field, the statue of an offi-

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cer, glass in hand, is placed on the edge of an abrupt, low, rocky hill, without any base except the necessary thin plate of bronze beneath the feet. To persons looking from below it may well appear, at the first glance, the figure of a living man. But this is not a worthy aim in the making of a work of art. Even a very good statue could not fail to seem cheap and trivial thus deprived of proper station and emphasis.

But right placing is as important with regard to out-door monuments as intrinsic excellence. A beautiful statue may be shorn of half its effect if badly stationed ; a good substructure can rarely be designed unless the destined station is exactly known ; and, on the other hand, a fine bit of landscape or a dignified open space in a city street may be seriously injured by the inappropriateness even of a work that is meritorious in itself.

It should be remembered, first of all, that, as a monument is a palpably artificial thing, the best place for it is where other artificial objects are conspicuous. In a park, it

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should be set at the intersection of roads or paths, on a terrace, near a building, or at the side of a formal avenue. No better situation for statues of certain kinds could be imagined than the Mall in Central Park, where a long double row, alternating with the symmetrically spaced elms, would greatly increase the stately beauty of the promenade as well as its interest to the people who frequent it. Commonwealth Avenue in Boston, with its wide open walk between double rows of trees, flanked by two driveways, looks as though specially designed for the reception of monuments; and it will be well if the entrance avenue of Druid Park in Baltimore some day sees its rows of monotonous, ugly urns, suggestive only of the Forty Thieves, replaced by varied yet harmonizing works of art. In Washington excellent situations, especially for equestrian statues or groups, are offered by the large circles and triangles which so frequently break the lines of radiating streets; and, of course, every city has certain little squares and open corners where, alone or in combination with trees and shrubs, monuments

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of one sort or another are eminently appropriate.

The French usually show better taste than ourselves in the placing of their works of sculpture, and the great Luxembourg and Tuileries gardens are adorned by many works which are beautifully displayed by their environment. But the French are apt to be less skilful in dealing with a naturalistic park than with formal gardens such as these, and so they sometimes make mistakes as patent as our own. In the Parc Monceau in Paris, for instance, several bronze figures and groups are set at a distance from the road in the centre of wide quiet stretches of lawn, and the arrangement is bad for two reasons: the repose of the lawns is disturbed and their natural character injured by the presence of conspicuous artificial features, and the statues are too far from the spectator's eye to be thoroughly well appreciated.

But a site which is fitting for a statue may not be fitting for any statue. The question of scale is very important—the question of the right relationship in size of the work of art

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to its environment. The figure of Webster in Central Park stands in an excellent place, in the centre of a large circle where two wide driveways cross. But it makes a poor effect, and not only because it is weak in conception and mechanical in execution. It is also out of scale. It is so large that it dwarfs alike the neighboring trees and the passing figures of living men. In another situation it might not produce this effect. Excessive size is a very common defect in the portrait-busts we occasionally place out-of-doors. A bust should be near the eye, for the sculptor has nothing but its expressiveness to depend upon for the effect of his work; and, if it is made very big, it produces, unaccompanied by a body to justify its scale, not an heroic impression, but simply one of unnatural and disagreeable bulk. Not size in the bust itself, but elaboration in the pedestal should supply bulk where a quite small monument would be ineffective. The French appreciate this, and their architectural memorials, crowned by busts little if at all larger than life, are among their artists' happiest efforts.

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Nor is it only when busts are to be placed that the architect may help in giving a monument sufficient size. The circle where the Webster stands demands a large monument. An equestrian statue or a group might well have been placed there ; but a smaller standing figure, on a lower but more spreading architectural base, would also have looked well. Where such a circle is formed, not by drives but by paths, a smaller monument would be more appropriate ; and no such spot should be given its adornment without nice consideration of this question of scale (as concerned both with the extent of the spot and with the character of the objects around it), in full consciousness of the fact that a mistake will injure both the work of art as such and the general effect of the locality.

Another important point is the height above the eye at which a statue stands. In city streets or squares this is determined simply by the pedestal. But in parks there are often excellent situations well above the roads and walks. Statues placed here will be seen, not against a background of buildings or foliage, but outlined against the sky ;

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and none should be placed here which are not particularly strong and pleasing in silhouette. The Bolivar in Central Park, on its little elevated plateau, proves that a bad statue will seem doubly bad when all its outlines are thus conspicuously brought out ; but, also, that this would be the best site in all the park for a really fine equestrian figure. Not far away from the Webster statue there is a figure of a Falconer which, if not a remarkable, is a pleasing work of art ; and its effectiveness is certainly increased by its elevation on a rocky slope, although one wishes that this slope had been a little less rural in character, a little better adapted to the reception of so artificial an ornament.

A good place for a group or figure which demands a certain elevation, is the top of a terrace or the balustrade of a bridge. The great stone bridges of many European towns bear wonderfully effective works of sculpture, but America has not yet begun to imitate them. On the low parapet of a little park-bridge, busts and other works of modest size might be very beautifully used ; and

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here, or along the balustrade of a terrace, we might fittingly commemorate many men hardly great enough to justify the erection of more ambitious independent monuments.

Again, it should be asked, Is the monument to be seen from every side or from one or two sides only? A figure or group not specially designed for a given spot is, of course, most successful when, as we walk around it, each step reveals new beauties of line and mass; and great injustice is done to the artist and the public if such a work is set where only one aspect can be enjoyed. But, on the other hand, it is unfair to artist and public if a work which has been designed to be seen from one side only is stationed so that the back is as conspicuous as the front. We can imagine works which would be very unjustly treated if placed along the Mall in Central Park, for here their backs could be seen only by means of a forbidden walk on the grass; but there are many others to which, for the same reason, a place like the Mall offers the kindest hospitality. In general, seated stat-

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ues and busts are best fitted for such a place, as it is difficult to give their backs any strong quality of interest.

This question of desirable points of view is even more suggestive than the question of scale as regards the main truth to which I have been leading up. This is the truth that, when a definite commission is given for a monument, the artist should be told just where it is to stand. He can then decide what must be its size, how strongly he must emphasize its silhouette, and whether he must consider all points of view with equal care or may subordinate some to the one which will be of primary importance. Such subordination, be it noted, even if it amounts to total sacrifice, is a perfectly lawful and laudable method of design when circumstances justify its choice. There is no more reason why the back of a monument should be as beautiful as the front, if the back will never be seen, than why a picture should be painted on both sides of the canvas. And the artist is shorn of his due prerogative when he is

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not allowed to choose whether he will subordinate it or not.

Of course works of sculpture, or of architecture and sculpture combined, are just as appropriate for urban adornment when their value is simply artistic as when it is commemorative, historical. Indeed, there is a chance that beauty will be greater in such works than in portrait-monuments, and so it is especially desirable, for the sake of the public's pleasure and the development of its taste, that they should be more generally placed in our streets and parks. When they are given to a city the question of site will almost always arise after the artist has finished his work. Then, if possible, he should be consulted with regard to its placing; and in any case this placing should be very carefully considered. Likewise, the pedestal should be as intelligently designed as that of a portrait-figure. For neither class of works is a plain base always the best; and nothing less than the best should satisfy us in constructions of so permanent a sort.

It would be well, too, if those who give

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non-commemorative works of art to our parks would intelligently consider what kinds are fitted for out-door erection. Broadly speaking, a statue or group looks best out-of-doors when it has a definite out-door character itself. The Falconer of which I just spoke is, in idea, a most excellent out-door figure, and so is Mr. Ward's Indian Hunter; but in another spot in Central Park there is a group called Auld Lang Syne, which seems to cry out for a roof above its head. No one would care to see, under the open sky, the figure of a mother rocking her baby to sleep; but a peasant mother trudging homeward from the field with her sleeping baby on her arm might be wholly satisfactory.

The question of appropriate placing naturally includes the character as well as the size of a monument. As the Falconer stands, or even as the Indian Hunter stands, on the edge of a road under a spreading tree, no one should think of placing a portrait-figure. And in certain retired nooks in the rural portions of a park we can fancy little groups of animals or rustic children looking well, although a commemorative or a highly ideal-

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istic figure would be out of harmony with the expression of the spot.

For obvious reasons it is less easy to give the right out-door look to a seated than to a standing figure of the commemorative sort ; but a seated figure looks better, I think, in those portions of a park where living people sit at rest, and the idea of repose is in the air, than in a city's rushing streets. Seward, poising his pen on the corner of Madison Square, seems sadly out of place, and many travellers must have noticed in London the almost comically inappropriate air of the sitting figure of George Peabody, surrounded by the City's crowds and clamor. Sometimes the architect might well be asked to furnish, not merely a base for a seated figure, but also some sort of a canopy or roof to mitigate the impression that it ought not to be out-of-doors. It would be interesting to know just how the Greeks and Romans dealt with this question of sitting figures ; it seems as though they must have preferred to place them under porches or colonnades rather than boldly beneath the sky. But in any case our climate is not the

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climate of Greece, and a statue sitting placidly with its lap full of snow does not produce a very fortunate effect.

Finally, the treatment of the ground around the base of a monument should be given due attention. The equestrian statue of Washington in the Public Garden at Boston is excellently placed, near the boundary of the pleasure-ground at the intersection of its main paths. But when I saw it last it had a curiously inappropriate look owing to the mass of tall, exotic plants which encircled its base. The profusion of these plants obliterated the connection of the pedestal with the soil, without supplying any strong connecting lines of stem and branch which might seem to bind them together; and their freely waving leaves were out of harmony with the rigid architectural lines. If the pedestal had risen naked from the smoothly clipped turf it would have looked much better, but best of all if partly draped in a closely clinging vine, which would not have disguised its form, yet, instead of separating it from the ground, would have con-

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nected the two in more intimate fashion. Nothing is more beautiful than the way in which the French use ivy to drape the pedestals of their open-air statues ; and even when these stand, as I think they should not, in the centre of open lawns, the mistake is partly condoned by the unifying creepers. So far as I remember, the French never surround a statue with a high growth of loose-leaved ornamental plants or a wide pattern-bed of flowers.

The distinction between right and wrong methods of treatment is, in this case, perfectly clear. The creepers unite themselves with the monument and unite it with the ground, while the big foliage-plants or pattern-beds supply a third element which has no intimate relationship with either turf or stone. The good effect of vines on pedestals may be studied in a few places in this country also, as on the pedestal of the Webster in Central Park. One would like to see them planted around the statues on the Mall as well, and afterward carefully restrained from undue luxuriance ; for the stone-work should be draped, not wholly

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concealed and denied. For such a purpose the so-called Japanese ivy is an excellent plant. It looks as though nature had invented it to serve the architect's needs. English ivy is not so certain to prove hardy in our Northern States, and although the Japanese ivy loses its leaves in winter, even then its beautiful net-work of delicate branches seems to tie the stone on which it clings to the bosom of Mother Earth.

Formally clipped plants, growing in simple but handsome pots, are sometimes appropriate around a monument, especially if it is placed on a terrace; and in certain other cases a plantation of shrubs is desirable, though rather as forming a background to the pedestal than as encircling it. The Farragut monument on Madison Square needs such a background, which, indeed, was planned for by the architect; and it will look much better when, from the rear, only the figure itself is visible.

When we think of the variety of beautiful effects which might be produced in our parks by monuments carefully planned for

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special situations—as for niches in foundation-walls, for the crowning of balustrades and bridge-parapets, the adornment of drinking-fountains, the completion of *ronds-points*, and the flanking of formal avenues—most of the work already done seems very monotonous and unimaginative. The chief trouble has been that we think too little of the question of site. When we order a statue we are too indifferent as to where it may go; when we buy one already made we are too careless in its placing. If we have thought at all it has been simply with regard to the intrinsic excellence of the figures. Now we should begin to consider our monuments in a broader way, as opportunities for the architect as well as for the sculptor, and as features in general views the harmonious beauty of which should be jealously preserved.

XI

Cemeteries

“Our blessed Saviour chose the Garden for his Oratory, and dying, for the place of his Sepulchre ; and we do avouch for many weighty causes, that there are none more fit to bury our dead in than in our Gardens and Groves, where our Beds may be decked with verdant and fragrant flowers, Trees and Perennial Plants, the most natural and instructive Hieroglyphics of our expected Resurrection and Immortality.”

—*John Evelyn.*

XI



ANY foreign writers have praised our rural cemeteries without reserve. The student of social conditions says that they express genuine poetic feeling as well as wise sanitary ideas, and the lover of art and Nature finds them our most characteristic achievements in the art of gardening. Their size, their park-like arrangement, their remoteness from centres of population, and the neatness with which they are kept, have often been described as worthy of imitation in European countries.

Certainly, as contrasted with the walled-in, crowded, dreary, sun-baked, weed-grown cemeteries one most often finds in Europe, ours deserve great praise. But they are not what they ought to be. Excellent in intention, they are too often bad in execution. No expenditure of money or pains is shunned, but grievous mistakes are made in

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determining how money and pains shall be bestowed.

Irrespective of the size of the community which it must serve, a modern American cemetery is sure to be a rural cemetery. But we scarcely ever see one in which this fundamental idea has been consistently expressed and then carefully preserved. Nature is asked to take our dead in charge, and then we do a thousand things to ruin the repose, the sanctity and beauty which she is ready to provide. We cut too many roads and paths, giving the burial-ground the look of a pleasuring-place rather than the look of a place where the living go to visit the dead. We make ample allowance of space to each purchaser of land, partly that his graves may not be crowded and partly that they may not destroy the unity and quietness of the landscape; and then we nullify our efforts by enclosing the lots with heavy railings, and by building huge and showy monuments. We think we want a natural landscape, and then we plant the cemetery—not the private lots alone, but also the

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parts which have been preserved intact for the sake of landscape-beauty—with tropical plants and beds of gaudy flowers, and with ribbon-patterns, borders, and endless puerile devices, wrought with bright-foliaged plants which support our climate for only a few weeks or months and then disappear, leaving dreary nakedness behind. In short, we lose sight of the main purpose with which the cemetery was designed, fail to keep any general idea or scheme in mind, and instead of a rural burial-ground produce something which is a meaningless, unnatural, and essentially vulgar compound of a cemetery, a park, a horticultural exhibition, and a collection of works of architecture and sculpture.

And this we do by means of a vast waste of pains and money. No one who has not inquired into such matters can imagine what it costs to plant out, year by year, the exotics which are supposed to adorn our cemeteries, and to winter them from one summer to another. Few realize the degree to which cemetery companies now compete with one another in this direc-

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tion, bidding for public patronage by means of costly horticultural establishments and verbose advertisements of their floral resources and achievements. All this is wrong—wrong from the point of view of good sense, from the point of view of true sentiment, and from the point of view of art.

The true ideal for the making of an American cemetery, whether large or small, is this : That spot should be selected which has the greatest natural charms in the direction of peacefulness of effect and the harmony which means variety in unity. Its features should be as carefully preserved as possible in laying out the walks and drives, and these should not be more numerous than is actually required for purposes of burial and of visiting the graves. Such planting as is needful should be done in a way to complete the existing kind of beauty, and accentuate, not disturb, the natural character of the spot. No costly exotics or showy flower-beds, and no formal plantations of any kind, should be allowed : they are out of keeping alike with the kind of beauty

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that is desired, and with the spirit in which a cemetery is properly visited. Owners of lots should not be permitted to surround them with railings: they are palpably useless, they are glaringly hurtful to peace and unity of aspect, they serve merely to accentuate the fact of proprietorship, and nothing could be in worse taste than such accentuation in such a place.

Furthermore, owners should be encouraged to make their monuments, not merely as artistic, but also as simple and unobtrusive, as possible. Only a great man, one to whose grave strangers are likely to come as pilgrims, is entitled to a conspicuous tomb. Even he does not require it, and the usual tenant of a grave requires no more than a sign to show that a grave is here, and to tell whose grave it is. The best tombstone in a rural cemetery is the one which, in form and color, is least strikingly apparent. Therefore a flat slab is better than a vertical stone or shaft, and gray slate or granite is a good material, red granite is a poor material, and the very worst of all is our favorite white marble. But the ideal mon-

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ument for a rural cemetery is, I think, a natural rock or boulder. Of course such a stone might be so set that, looking out of place, it would seem more artificial than a carven one—there is nothing so artificial as a patent affectation of simplicity. But very often one may be found set by Nature in a spot convenient for a grave, or may be so set by man as to have a perfectly natural look ; and then, with a space smoothed for the inscription but the rest of its moss-grown or vine-wreathed surface left untouched, it is a simple, serious, dignified, and artistic monument, worthy of the noblest dead.

Too often a committee charged with the erection of a civic memorial thinks it can dispense with an artist's aid. Too often a group or figure or architectural design (especially if it be for a Soldier's Monument) is ordered as a plain block of stone might be : —the commission for its material is given to a stone-yard or a quarry company, and the " art " is thrown in, some nameless and artless artisan in the company's employ being bidden to produce, often in the space of a

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few weeks, such a thing as a great artist could not execute without many months of careful study. Gradually, however, we are coming to realize that this is not the way to secure monuments for public display. Gradually we are learning that the artist's part in them is quite as important as the stone-cutter's or the mason's. But just in the place where one might think good taste would most surely prevail, and no care or pains would be counted too great—just here we do even worse than with our public monuments. In our cemeteries we still feel that we can dispense altogether with the artist's aid. When we commemorate our own beloved dead we think less of true beauty in the result than when we buy a dress or furnish a drawing-room. The stone-yard stands close to the cemetery's gate; and to the stone-yard we contentedly go when we want a slab or headstone, or even an emblematic figure or an elaborate architectural monument.

There is a chance for the exercise of true art in the designing of even the simplest head-stone; and there is the certainty of a

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hideous result when anything more complicated is designed without an artist's help. The big, awkward tombs, the tall, ungraceful shafts, the clumsy, meaningless, hideous figures, and the commonplace, ill-proportioned head-stones which fill our cemeteries, would be exasperating if they were not so pitiful. They are tributes of true affection, often costing, one cannot doubt, a great deal more than their givers could rightly afford to pay ; and thus, in their distressing failure to be either beautiful or expressive, they bring a tear to the eye rather than a word of scorn or anger to the lips. If, in thus telling other people that we loved our dead, we could consent to speak less loudly and more carefully, how beautiful, how touching and impressive a cemetery might be ! The price now paid for a big monument, bad in design and worse in ornamentation, might persuade even a great artist to design a cross or head-stone which, in its simple way, would be an object of the utmost value. Such an object would really honor the memory of our dead, instead of simply shouting out their names with a crude and vulgar

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voice ; and the association of many such would make our cemeteries really beautiful spots. Now they usually look like stone-cutter's yards on an extended scale.

I know one rural cemetery near Boston where the trustees have taken this matter of monuments, as well as the matter of planting, into their own hands. A skilful architect has made for them a number of tombstone designs, some more elaborate than others, but all simple enough to be executed by an ordinary stone-cutter. Among these designs the lot-owner can choose ; and if he cares for none of them, he must submit his own for the trustees' sanction. Nor may he plant his lot as he pleases. All the planting is done under the trustees' supervision. There is none of a formal and none of a showy or expensive kind. Wild flowers are encouraged to grow, native trees and shrubs are preserved wherever desirable, and hardy flowers have been planted where they could help the general effect of the landscape. Of course no enclosures are permitted around the lots, and, while the grass is shorn in the occupied parts and all parts are kept appro-

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priately neat, there is no excess of mere tidiness and trimness ; for a cemetery is not a park or a garden ; it is not a place for pleasure-seeking or an environment for the homes of men. It is the home of the dead ; it is God's Acre ; it should prove a guardian's presence, but not a horticulturalist's enthusiasm.

Nature made this spot very beautiful with shady woods and with a varied surface, often distinctly picturesque and yet not too wild or broken to seem a true God's Acre for the peaceful resting of the dead ; and the truest kind of art has done all that it could, first to preserve, and then to accentuate Nature's scheme. Richardson lies buried in this cemetery ; and if other artists could see how quiet and beautiful it is, how satisfying to both eye and mind, how far superior, from every point of view, to the usual burial-ground—which seems to have been given over to the running of a race in crude display between gardener and stone-cutter—then, I think, all the artists in America might ask to lie near Richardson.

XII

The Beauty of Trees

“I should only observe with regard to trees that Nature has been kinder to them in point of variety than even to its living forms.”

—*Gilpin.*

“It has been the office of art to educate the perception of beauty. We are immersed in beauty but our eyes have no clear vision.”

—*Emerson.*

XII



FROM the artistic point of view trees have three characteristics which may be separately studied—form, texture, and color.

The first element in the form of a tree is its general outline, its contour, the silhouette it makes when relieved against the sky or against masses of trees of other colors. The outline peculiar to a given species varies a good deal, of course, in different individuals ; but in all full-grown and well-grown individuals it will be so nearly the same that the typical shape of the species may often be expressed in a very simple diagram on paper. An isosceles triangle with a broad base, for instance, gives the typical outline of the spruce ; a similar figure, but with swelling sides, gives that of a freely developed hemlock ; the white elm would fill a vase-like figure supported by a straight line for the

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stem, the hickory an elongated oval, the sugar-maple a much fuller oval, the white birch a very long and slender oval, and the oak a figure approaching more nearly to a circle. In other cases the form of the head is more irregular, as with the silver-maple, for instance, the typical shape of which would be expressed by a diagram of broken outline. But even in such cases this shape may easily be imprinted upon the memory, and, once imprinted, the pleasure of looking upon a new specimen of the tree is greatly increased by one's knowledge of how nearly it coincides with the typical form of the species to which it belongs, or how far it departs from it.

But a tree's general outline is by no means the only thing which determines its form. Its structure is of almost more importance than its outline, as this may be greatly affected by position, accident, or man's interference, while, within very narrow limits, its structure must always be the same. Branches now droop stiffly like those of the spruce, and now gracefully like those of the elm, or they spread at right angles as in the cedar of

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Lebanon, or sharply ascend as in the Lombardy poplar ; and between these extremes there are almost as many variations in branch-development as there are kinds of trees. Each variation gives a tree a distinctive form, the peculiarities of which are increased by other facts of structure, such as the greater or smaller number of the branches, giving more or less density and uniformity of surface to the head. And each of these differences in form means a difference in the expression of a tree, determining the character of its beauty and therefore its appropriateness to a given situation. A tree with a regular, formal outline is beautiful in a way wholly unlike that of a tree with an irregular, broken outline ; and the same is true when we contrast one that has many main branches dividing again into many minor ones, and therefore a dense, compact head, with one that has fewer branches and a more open and broken surface.

The average size to which the trees of a given species are apt to grow is, of course, another element to be considered in studying

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tree-forms. This is so obvious a characteristic that even the least artistic eye will note it, the most thoughtless planter will take it somewhat into account. But if we may judge by the results we find all around us in places where an intelligent landscape-gardener has not been employed, few persons pay any attention to other characteristics of form. Mere chance or, at most, a thoughtless, abstract preference for some kind of tree, seems much more often to have regulated our planting than a clear realization of intrinsic characters, accompanied by reflection with regard to the appropriateness of one character or another to a special spot. I have known an intending planter to ask for elms, and yet not know whether he wanted American white elms which would grow up into vase-like, drooping forms, or English elms which would assume shapes almost identical with the shapes of oaks. If a single tree is wanted in a conspicuous position a sugar-maple is chosen, perhaps, because sugar-maples are known to be "good trees," although it would be less well in place with its roundish head than a hickory with its

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taller, narrower shape, or a hemlock, sweeping the grass with its branches. It is the same when trees are set in masses ; little thought is given to the way in which their forms will contrast one with the other, and a distressing confusion results where pendulous birches, spiry-topped spruces, round and solid horse-chestnuts, and straggling silver-maples work in concord only in the sense that each prevents the others from appearing well, and helps to deprive the plantation as a whole of unity, grace, and effective expression.

But even when facts of outline are borne in mind, facts of structure are constantly forgotten. Yet these are of particular importance when a tree is placed in isolation. Almost any kind of contour is agreeable in an isolated tree, but in certain situations it makes a vast difference whether the eye rests upon an almost unbroken surface, like that presented by the horse-chestnut until it has reached a great age, or upon a surface which an artist would call boldly and effectively modelled—a surface diversified by those alternations of light and shadow which give

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variety of form within the limits of the general contour.

By the texture of a tree I mean the character of its masses of foliage as determined by the manner of growth of the lighter spray, and the number, shape, disposition, and tissue of its leaves. We know what great differences in texture—in real or apparent solidity and in surface effect—may be produced, for example, by different methods of weaving silken threads, resulting now in silk, now in gauze, now in satin, and again in velvet. Nature produces similar differences as she weaves the leafy coverings of her trees; and they play as great a part in determining the effect of these trees as even varieties of form.

If a spruce and a white pine were exactly the same in contour and in the disposition of their foliage into masses, the longer leaves of the pine, and their arrangement in clusters instead of in rows, would give it a wholly different effect because a wholly different texture, while the feathery spray and leafage of a hemlock would appear quite

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distinct from either. Even two species of pine may be very unlike in texture, owing to diversities in the length, the rigidity, and the number of their needles. And with deciduous trees the case is the same. A great variety in texture is found even among species closely allied with one another and, when leafless, very similar in effect. Leaves may be large or small, numerous or comparatively few, clustered or scattered, held erect or horizontally or in a drooping manner; they may have simple outlines, or be conspicuously cut or toothed or lobed, may be thick or thin, stiff or pliant in tissue, may be smooth or rough or shining of surface. A variation in any one characteristic greatly alters the general aspect of the foliage, and as there are so many characteristics which may be combined and recombined afresh, it is not strange that Nature's weaving processes should result in innumerable kinds of texture.

Upon these the expression of a tree depends quite as much as upon varieties of form or varieties of color, unless, indeed, color be so peculiar as to be no longer

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green, or form so eccentric as to be hardly normal—as in the case of fastigate or of weeping trees. A tree is sturdy-looking or graceful chiefly by reason of its form; but such degrees of sturdiness as may be expressed by the words severity, sombreness, majesty, picturesqueness, and such degrees of grace as are called fragility, weakness, delicacy, lightness—these spring in very large part from the texture of its foliage. Small leaves, and especially those which are small and elongated, or small and quivering, do more than a light color to give a tree a fragile aspect, a feminine kind of grace, while large and simple leaves almost of themselves imply a masculine air, and large, simple, and thick-textured leaves mean a certain majesty even in a plant so small that we call it a shrub.

A small magnolia, for example, has more dignity than the biggest honey-locust. A catalpa is more masculine-looking than a willow of even the largest size; and if we imagine the thin tissue of its leaves exchanged for a thicker, stiffer tissue, we can easily see how its dignity would be still

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further increased. Even the difference in substance between the foliage of the American and the European beech—the latter being somewhat stiffer and much glossier—makes a difference in the expression of the two trees; and there is a great contrast in expression, despite much similarity in form and structure, between the white oak with its large, round-lobed, dull-surfaced leaves, the scarlet oak with its deeply cut and glossy leaves, and the willow-oak with its very small, simply outlined and still glossier leaves. A uniform texture, caused by comparatively small leaves regularly and thickly distributed over the branches, gives a tree a quiet, restful look; and a broken, spotted texture, caused by sparse, scattered, and conspicuously cut leaves (as in the button-wood), gives it an unquiet look.

All such facts, the commonplaces of the landscape-gardener, should be noted and appraised by everyone who aspires to the title of a lover of trees. There are none richer in possibilities of pleasure to the cultivated eye, even if actual work in the way of planting is not in question; for, while

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forms vary much in trees and colors vary much, textures vary more; among the smaller woody plants individuality chiefly depends upon them; and although their diversities may seem less striking than those of form and color to the careless observer, they soon grow to be equally conspicuous with the growth of the observing and appreciating faculties.

And when planting is in question they are of very great importance. It is almost as bad to group trees inharmoniously with regard to their textures as with regard to their forms. Any artist would know that trees which are quiet and restful in effect may be used in larger masses, and will less conspicuously affect the appearance of their neighbors, than those which are spotted and restless of aspect. He would know, too, that it is better to relieve a light and feathery tree against a group of more solid foliage than to reverse the terms of the combination. He would know that the massive, uniform surfaces which make a good background are less pleasing in an isolated specimen standing near the eye. He would

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know that the great, glossy, leathery leaves of the evergreen magnolia are just what is wanted in one spot, just what is not wanted in another, and that, while the trembling leaves of the aspen and the drooping, fringe-like texture of the cut-leaved birch unfit them for many positions, they make them especially valuable for others. He would know that with every change of position and environment comes a change in the effect of the texture of a tree, one sort looking best in full sunlight, another in a shadowed spot, or overhanging a stream, or set close against the walls of a house. An artist feels all this in advance if his profession be landscape-gardening ; and he feels it at least in intelligent appreciation of existing results if it be some other branch of art, for it is every artist's habit to appraise all that he sees for the three properties of form, texture, and color. But how few amateur planters feel it in advance ; how few lovers of trees judge their own or their neighbors' places with such tests in mind ! Even when questions of form and of color are somewhat regarded, questions of texture very seldom are. Yet

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a cultivated eye is as much distressed by seeing a rigid-looking spruce or a solid sugar-maple where a feathery hemlock or a delicate honey-locust might better stand, as by seeing a purple beech where harmony calls for a green one, or a lofty hickory where good composition demands a low and spreading dogwood.

Among the varieties which Nature creates when clothing her trees in her usual livery of green, an artist would distinguish varieties of tint and varieties of tone or "value." The green of foliage may be of a bluish, or a yellowish, or a grayish tint, and, keeping this tint, it may vary from a very pale to a very dark tone. Again, the effect of a tree may be compounded of the different colors shown by the different sides of its leaves—may be a mottled and not a simple tone; and it is always affected by the character of the surface of the leaves, a smooth and shining tissue giving a tone quite unlike that produced by a dull or a woolly tissue, even though upon examination the same shade of coloring matter be discovered. And then,

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when her greens are exhausted, Nature falls back upon other colors, and gives us such an eccentric thing as, for instance, the purple beech.

In default of a marked natural gift, it is more difficult, perhaps, to cultivate a good eye for color than for form ; yet it can be largely developed by a process of constant observation and comparison. The main trouble is that few people even try to appreciate the difference between coloristic harmonies and discords. They do not really look at anything they see.

As it is with texture, so it is with color in trees : restfulness, which implies dignity, of effect, is more often desirable than restlessness and fragile grace, and is always desirable when a large mass is in question ; and it may broadly be said that dark colors are quieter than pale colors, and that the most restless of all are those which are mottled instead of simple. The unquiet look of a silver-maple, for instance, as compared with the restful look of a sugar-maple, depends as much upon the contrasted colors of the upper and lower sides of its leaves as upon

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their more sharply cut shapes and the more straggling form of the tree itself. The silver-maple is the better tree to supply a lively accent where this is wanted ; but the other is preferable for use in large masses, or as a single specimen where a strong yet quiet note will be the right one.

The most effective combinations of color, when they are rightly made, are those which mean contrast rather than simple concord. But it is usually better, and it is always safer, to place two tones of the same tint together—as a dark and a lighter bluish green—rather than to associate two alien tints—as a bluish with a yellowish green. Grayish greens are the best when something is needed to harmonize other strongly contrasting tints. Everyone knows this who has studied the work of landscape-painters ; and we may sometimes see the fact illustrated toward evening, when a plantation which has been inharmonious in color under a bright light becomes harmonious simply by the fading of one or two of its tints into grayish twilight hues.

Of course, when a tree is not green at all—

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when it is purple like the well-known variety of beech, or red like some Japanese maples, or blue like a Colorado spruce, or bright yellow like many varieties of shrubs—it should be used with peculiar care, and a discretion amounting to the most rigid parsimony. It is like the red cloak which landscape-painters are so fond of employing—invaluable, sometimes, if set in exactly the right place, but by no means always needful, and always ruinous if wrongly placed or over-emphasized.

Again, all objects which come into visual contact with our trees must be considered as affecting their own colors. A tree which would look well against a background of dark rock might not look as well lifted against a background of sky; and one which would harmonize with a brown or a white house might not harmonize with a red brick house. The sheen and color of water, too, and its reflecting powers, demand that its borders be very carefully treated. A bright tree which might give a welcome accent in itself might give a distinctly over-emphatic accent if doubled by

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reflection in a sheet of water ; and, in general, moderately dark or grayish or whitish trees best sustain this reflection. We are right for once, in our fashion of placing willows near water ; not only their feathery texture but their tender and often neutral colors fit them well for such situations. If we imagine a large white willow changed to a vivid yellow-green, like that of the box-elder, we feel at once that its fitness for the neighborhood of water would be seriously impaired. Of course, in the autumn the case is different ; then all tones are changed for more vivid ones ; brightness is the characteristic quality of the landscape, and the brighter the reflected note, the better it often appears.

The color of foliage is more or less affected by its texture. Given leaves of a certain tint of green, the tree will seem darker if its head is massive and dense than if it is feathery and infiltrated with light. And it is, of course, the general color-effect, and not the color of a leaf separately considered, which concerns the student of Nature's beauties and of the planter's tasks.

It should also be remembered that the

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color of its foliage is not the only thing which determines the color of a tree. Its trunk and branches are often very apparent and are sometimes very striking in color. The foliage of the canoe-birch would not, of itself, make it a very conspicuous tree, but the contrast between its dark glossy leaves with their paler under sides and its pure white bark makes it so very striking that it is difficult to place it harmoniously. The lighter hue of the foliage of the gray birch is also accentuated by the whitish gray of its bark, as the mottled appearance given the button-wood by the shape and disposition of its leaves is accentuated by the mottled color of its splitting and peeling bark. There is no end to the varieties of combination thus presented for the planter's use ; and, although each one renders his task more complicated and difficult, each affords him a new chance for some specially beautiful effect, if he can learn how to use it rightly.

Form, texture, and color—these, then, are the three qualities to be considered when trees are studied for their artistic value.

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If, in ornamental planting, we used only the materials which Nature supplies in the neighborhood of our homes, no one of these qualities would seem of more interest to the planter than the others, or would offer him more chances of making mistakes. But the efforts of generations in introducing exotic species of trees and in perpetuating casual natural eccentricities have brought color into greater relative prominence in the nursery than it assumes in Nature's workshop. The planter is therefore more apt to be struck by varieties of color than by those of form and texture; and, as a rule, he thinks more of the effects which he can produce with them, and commits with them his most frequent and conspicuous errors.

If a true artist could always be employed when a work of landscape-gardening is in question, then the development of our numerous and striking nursery-varieties of color—which include tones of purple, red, blue, white, and especially yellow in a score of different degrees, and many striped and mottled effects as well—might be counted wholly fortunate; for, of course, the wider the range

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of an artist's palette, the more numerous will be the kinds of beauty which he may produce. But color is the most difficult of qualities to manage, the most revengeful when managed wrongly ; and under the hand of ordinary planters the varied material of to-day means merely a greater confusion of tints, a more painful degree of unrest, spottiness, and ugliness, than would have been achieved had materials from the neighboring woods been alone attainable.

Too often, especially in small grounds, it seems as though the aim had been to do away as far as possible with medium green tones, and to set upon a carpet of vivid emerald turf as many trees of strong eccentric hue as could be collected. Even when the general tone of the landscape is pretty well preserved, and bright or variegated trees and shrubs are used simply as accents here and there, too little thought is given to placing them where they will be emphatic yet not disturbing, and too little to the question of their beauty as distinct from their mere novelty or eccentricity.

As a rule, it is better to avoid striking col-

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ors altogether, and keep to the quiet medium tones of green. These offer variety enough to satisfy a cultivated eye in the majority of cases ; and even if an emphatic note is really needed, it can be supplied, where the general effect is softly harmonious, by means of something less brilliant than a golden poplar or a purple beech. For the amateur, in short, the safest course is the best one to follow, although it may not be the one which an artist will always follow in his search for the highest and most individual kinds of beauty. If a dull tree stands where a bright one would have produced a better effect, we may feel that a chance has been missed. But if a bright one stands where harmony required a dull one, then we feel that an actual sin against good taste has been committed.

The art of the gardener has likewise greatly increased variety in the forms and in the textures of trees, giving us pyramidal and weeping shapes, and finely cut or fringed foliage, in a perpetually increasing flood of "novelties." Here again the amateur is apt to be seduced into thinking that novelty means excellence, that eccentricity means charm ;

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he is apt to plant what he selects without regard to harmony of general effect, and to select in the interests of curiosity rather than of genuine beauty. And here again it may be said that the safest course is the wisest one to follow. Normal shapes can hardly be so distressing, however they may be combined, as abnormal ones are sure to be if there is the slightest error in their combination.

No tree is well understood until it is understood in all the stages of its growth. The typical shape of a young tree often differs very greatly from the typical shape of the same tree at maturity, and this again from its typical shape in old age; and, in planting, regard must be paid to the question whether an immediate effect or a long-postponed effect ought most to be considered. A tree set in isolation on a lawn, in full view of the house, ought to be beautiful in youth and at the same time give promise of beauty (perhaps of a different kind, but still appropriate) in later years; whereas in planting a belt of wood in the distance,

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the principal trees should be so chosen that they will look better and better the older they grow, while present effect may be chiefly considered in others which are destined to be cut as development progresses.

Texture changes less with the passage of years than form. Color is practically persistent year after year, but alters from month to month ; and this fact should also be borne in mind. There are some trees, like the yellow-wood, which are of a medium tint in the middle of summer, but of a yellowish green in spring, and it is unwise to place them where during a few weeks they will not look well, even if later on they assume a harmonious hue. And our brilliant autumnal effects should also be more carefully considered than they are to-day.

The knowledge we need to gain, if we are to make the best of our opportunities for planting, is not a mere knowledge of the various forms and colors and textures that we may find in trees—it is a knowledge of trees themselves. Each species, each variety, presents itself to us as a whole made up

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of three blended elements, and it is the whole, as such, with which we should strive to familiarize ourselves. We must learn, not which tints or shapes in the abstract harmonize with others, but which actual trees are harmonious in association. We must learn how each one looks in all the stages of its growth, at various seasons of the year, and under differing conditions of light and shade, of nearness and remoteness. If a certain tree seems out of place, we must be able to say, not merely why we think so, but what other tree might better have been chosen. And when a spot is to be planted we must be able to picture to ourselves how it should be filled, not in vague harmonies of abstract hues and shapes, but in definite mental portraits of available trees.

Too often a much lower degree of knowledge than this is thought all-sufficient. Too often it is supposed that, when one can recognize the trees he most commonly meets and call them by name, he really knows them. But he does not unless he can see them, so to speak, when he does not see them—unless he can remember and ap-

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preciate all their special qualities. We can all recognize our friends when we meet them ; but something more than this power is needed by the painter when he wants to compose a picture of many figures, or to draw a face which shall have a given expression ; and something more by the connoisseur if he is properly to estimate and thoroughly to enjoy the artist's work. And as the painter and the connoisseur study and assimilate all they see, so too should the landscape-gardener and, no less, the lover of Nature, if they want to understand and enjoy all that is offered them, either in the unassisted work of Nature or in that which Nature and the artist have produced in partnership. Taste is the guide we need, and taste means the cultivation of our own perceptive powers, not the learning of cut-and-dried æsthetic formulas.

To study art as a preparation for the study and appreciation of Nature may seem, at first thought, a reversal of the right order of things. But it is a very wise thing to do. If a painter were never anything more

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than a mere recorder of natural facts, a mere reporter in prosaic speech of things actually seen in this spot or that, his results would still be of service, enlarging our field of observation by the addition of his field, and preserving for constant examination effects which are transitory in Nature. But a true painter is much more than this. He has at his command the power to preserve general truth of effect and yet accentuate certain special truths more forcibly than, to our eyes, Nature has presented them. This power of interpretation in one artist's work makes some one given thing more plain than Nature made it; in another artist's it makes another thing more plain, and in the combined work of all it makes Nature as a whole more plain, more vivid, more impressive. No matter how carefully and patiently we may study Nature in herself, we do not appreciate her to the full until we know what the great painters of the world have seen in her—how her forms, her textures, her colors have appeared to eyes, tastes, and feelings which by birth are clearer and keener than those of the average man, and

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by incessant training have been developed to a still higher degree of power.

In the study of form especially, a familiarity with landscape-painting is of infinite value. The color-scheme of Nature never remains for an hour the same and, whatever phase of it may be chosen, must be transposed, transmuted, before it can be put upon canvas. Therefore we must go to Nature to learn all that beautiful color may mean. But forms are less variable and can be more faithfully painted; and the easiest way to cultivate a true appreciation of them is to study good landscape-pictures. A painter who has poetic power may help us very much by idealizing the suggestions and rough-draughts of Nature, and expressing her conceptions more perfectly than, in this warring world, she is often able to express them. Colors as beautiful as those we see every day in Nature we seldom see approached in paint; but forms and compositions more perfect than those we are apt to find alive we constantly find on canvas.

This is true even of the pictures of to-day, although to-day composition is less

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highly valued than any other element in landscape-painting ; but it is more conspicuously true of the pictures of elder generations. The great classic masters of landscape — Claude, for instance, and Poussin and Ruysdael, and also the great modern master Corot,—give admirable lessons to the student of beautiful forms ; and, fortunately, their works can be as profitably consulted by him in engraved reproductions as on the actual canvas. Of course, they should not be consulted as text-books but as stimulants and explanations, as cultivators of taste, as teachers of what is meant by beautiful associations, by strong or graceful contours, by effective or subtile contrasts of light and shadow, by satisfactory contrasts of textures — by variety in unity, by diversity in harmony, by dignity, breadth, simplicity, repose, and charm. These are the things they teach, not just what or how to plant in any possible given case ; but these are the things we must learn in advance of any planting, if we are to make a work of art of our result.

XIII

Four Trees

“ There is, I conceive, scarcely any tree that may not be advantageously used in the various combinations of form and color.”

—*Gilpin.*

XIII



KNOWLEDGE and good taste must help in the grouping of trees, whatever they are and wherever they stand, if the result is to be artistically good. But, of course, the more peculiar a tree is in form or color, the more unlike the trees which chiefly compose the picture in which it is to stand, the more carefully should the laws of harmony, of simplicity, of proper emphasis and agreeable contrast be consulted on its behalf, or, rather, on behalf of the picture as a whole.

Four trees with which we are very familiar are conspicuously peculiar: the Lombardy poplar, the weeping willow, the purple or copper beech, and the white birch.

No tree is more useful in the right place or more ugly in the wrong place than the Lombardy poplar. One of Nature's

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“sports,” never reproducing itself from seed, but easy of reproduction by the gardener, it is now an old friend of the people of every European land. In America we do not see it so often, although our fathers dearly loved to plant it. It has suffered much from disease in recent years, and, moreover, the canons of such gardening taste as we possess say that its formality is inappropriate in naturalistic landscape-scenes.

Standing alone in the centre of a naturalistic landscape, this tall, narrow, and rigid tree does indeed look out of place, and almost as sadly out of place if carelessly introduced among groups of other trees. Its qualities are distinctly architectonic; but when we recognize this it is not hard to imagine good stations for it.

In a narrow city street, for instance, where much shade is not wanted, it would look extremely well, for its character would be supported and explained by the architectural lines around it. And, on the other hand, it is the best of all trees in country districts where there are no architectural

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lines at all, and no vertical natural lines, and where, in consequence, it can absolutely dominate the landscape. I know that many travellers object to its constant recurrence along the rural highways in the flat parts of France and Belgium ; but can they name a tree which might profitably take its place ? More shade than it gives would doubtless be welcome to those who travel these highways a-foot ; but as an element in the beauty of the general prospect it is eminently right. Lower, rounder trees would have much less dignity if miles of them were seen at once, and they would not so finely accentuate the qualities in which the charm of flat landscapes resides. The tall, stiff rows of poplars draw the eye forcibly to the horizon, and thus explain its illimitable distance and the broad, quiet, generous spaciousness of the land which it encloses. If these highways were winding instead of straight, then poplars would be much less effective ; and in abrupt, rocky regions they lose their personal importance while adding little to the general charm of a scene.

In our own parks, pleasure-grounds, and

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gardens, they should likewise be used where accentuation is wanted ; and this means, of course, but sparingly and in carefully chosen spots. No one should set a Lombardy poplar by itself on an open lawn, as he might set a maple or a beech ; or plant it in groups, five or six Lombardies all by themselves ; or use it as an avenue-tree in a naturalistic scheme ; or sprinkle it about at random in a thick plantation, a dozen Lombardies to send their peaks up here and there, inconsequently, above the graceful sky-line of their tuftier neighbors. But one or two Lombardy poplars, carefully set in a thick plantation just where their spires are needed to relieve its general softness and to break the sky-line with a touch of asperity and decision—these may be as effective, as beautiful, as one or two real spires springing up through a mass of village trees. On the border of the lake in Central Park, near its western end, there are two or three old poplars standing on a little promontory ; and it is a great pity that they are old, for each new point of view newly impresses us with their inestimable value on just this spot.

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But perhaps the best place of all for a Lombardy poplar is beside a cottage, where its lines contrast with the lowness of the architectural lines yet are excused by them and give them increased dignity as well as charm. I have often seen it thus by a European cottage which was enchantingly picturesque but, without its poplar, would have been commonplace and tame. The Lombardy's value, I say, is the value of a pronounced accent; and everyone knows that accentuation of any sort should have a good reason to excuse it, and should not be often repeated. Monotony itself is better, in the long run, than an exclamatory style.

Wholly different in character is the weeping willow, but even more difficult to use really well. Its excessive pliancy, its mournful, disconsolate expression, make it as conspicuous as the tallest poplar to eyes which can note the forms of trees even when they are not relieved against the sky. As soon as we see a weeping willow it almost shouts out its contrast to the simpler shapes of the trees which determine the general character

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of all our landscapes or garden-pictures. Yet we see it everywhere, in every kind of situation.

It grows easily and very quickly, it is not nice with regard to soils or sites, and it puts forth its leaves very early in the spring. These facts recommend it, and some people find it beautiful, while more believe that it is "poetic." It is planted perpetually ; but it seldom looks even reasonably well, and it is hard to say where it ought to look best. I confess, indeed, that I don't care about it at all myself. I can see that it has a certain individual charm, and am ready to agree that, rightly placed, this charm might increase the beauty of a landscape-picture. But in all my wanderings I never once have seen it rightly placed ; I never once have seen it where it did not hurt the effect of its surroundings, or, at least, if it stood apart from other trees, where some tree of a different species would not have looked far better. Our gardens owe much to the Chinese, but they have done a good deal to offset their claims upon our gratitude by sending us the weep-

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ing willow. If it came by the way of the rivers of Babylon, that may excuse its presence in a garden which is planned as a symbolic exposition of sentiment, but not in one which is planned as a work of art.

I have, indeed, seen one or two Japanese pictures where a weeping willow looked very well. There it overhung a cascade; and it looked well because the falling lines of water harmonized with its own lines—because, so to say, the cascade excused its abnormal shape. If you have a little cascade, then, plant a little weeping willow; or if you have a big waterfall, encourage a weeping willow to grow big beside it; but do not allow one to shed its tears in the centre of your lawn, or to mingle its weak pendulousness with the sturdier, more normal forms of the trees in your foreground group or your forest-like plantation. It can never form an accent, like the Lombardy poplar; it can only form a contrast and, almost invariably, an inharmonious one. It is out of all relation with soft round-headed trees, and still more with angularly spreading or aspiring trees.

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Some pendulous trees do form accents, but they are of sturdier habit than the weeping willow. There is a garden variety of beech, for instance, which we call the weeping beech; but it does not lament in as weak and watery a way as the willow. It would look very much out of place in a landscape-picture of an extremely naturalistic type; but where the desired effect is what old English gardeners used to call "polished"—where it is a distinctly gardenesque effect—then a weeping beech may look well; and best of all where it stands in a palpably artificial scene yet is supported by great neighboring masses of rock. I should be sorry to see the fine weeping beeches removed from the West Drive in Central Park, but I should be still more sorry to see them turned into weeping willows.

In a rural spot, a cottage with a weeping willow beside it looks better than a naked cottage; but another tree would still more clearly express, by its greater sturdiness, the idea of comfortable protection. But the very worst place of all for a weeping willow,

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worse even than the centre of a lawn, is the very place where we most often find it—beside a placid sheet of water. The beauty of a little sheet of water is the beauty of repose, of simplicity, of breath, of horizontal lines ; with all of these qualities the drooping lines of the weeping willow conflict, for they are almost as restless, in the artistic sense, as is the color of pattern-beds of flowers. Truly, a willow may look well by a pond—better, perhaps, in some places, than any other tree ; but not a weeping willow. All the good points about this tree—the delicate character of its spray, the tender, pallid color of its leaves, and their twinkling, airy grace—are found in greater perfection in its fine cousin, the white willow, and in many of its other cousins, too. The white willow, which is also a foreigner but grows contentedly with us and has actually run wild in our northern woods, is even more individual in color and texture than the lachrymose one ; it is likewise graceful, but with a much more manly and normal kind of grace ; and it has all the virtues that its relative lacks—dignity, simplicity, and a general effect which

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harmonizes while it contrasts with the tree-forms which are likely to occur around it. Where this tree can be used there is no excuse for a weeping willow ; and where it cannot, then very certainly a weeping willow is not wanted.

The purple beech is normal in shape and normal in texture, but its abnormal color puts it on the list of eccentric, and therefore dangerous, trees. Rightly used, it may very beautifully assist the effect of a garden-picture ; wrongly used, it may ruin it entirely.

It should never figure in a distinctly rural picture ; and, in a gardenesque picture it should never look as though accident had determined its place, for everyone knows that it is not a natural species, but a chance variety, artificially propagated. It should never be planted in or near a wood, on a rough hill-side, in a picturesque glen or hollow. Its place is in definitely ornamental, well-tended, "polished" grounds, near a house, or in the more civilized parts of a public pleasure-ground. Here it may stand in isolation and be lovely to look upon,

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especially if its tone tends toward golden brown—if it is a copper rather than a truly purple beech. Indeed, it looks better in isolation than in any possible group. It is evidently a “specimen” tree, valued because of its peculiarities; and besides, when freely developed, it is very symmetrical, and where color is abnormal one wants no irregularities of form.

If a purple beech cannot stand alone, and yet must be planted, its associates should be very carefully chosen. Of course, the best will be its own relatives, the green beeches—either the English form with its dark green, glossy foliage, or the American with its lighter foliage, paler bark, and more graceful ramifications. Failing these, it groups most agreeably with trees which repeat its own lines in a general way, as with the scarlet maple, or with those which form gentle contrasts, like the elliptical sugar-maple. Its effect would be entirely spoiled by near neighborhood with the broken, picturesque outline of a white pine, or the hard, conical shape of a spruce. Again, all trees which accord well with it in form may not

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suit it in color. Here once more we want no sharp contrasts ; the tree itself is in sharp contrast with the general effect of the scene ; the planter's care should be to mitigate rather than reinforce its emphasis.

Once, in New England, I saw in a fine old country - place an avenue of purple beeches. They were the pride of the place, but the pride was a false one. How could a long double line of purple trees fail to disturb the restfulness and harmony which should characterize every landscape-picture ? Anything that is eccentric, in form or in color, should, I say again, be very sparingly as well as very carefully used. One purple beech may beautifully enliven a garden ; two or three, no matter how set and surrounded, are pretty sure to hurt even a landscape of considerable extent. And as it is with this purple tree, so it is of course with the thousand and one purple and yellow and striped and spotted trees and shrubs of which we are so foolishly fond. A very few of them may increase general beauty of effect, but even this is by no means certain ; many of them are sure to be harmful ; and their

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intrinsic beauty is certainly not so great that general beauty should for its sake be sacrificed. In a beautiful place we shall not find any avenue of purple beeches, any great bed of yellow shrubs, or any speckling and spotting of such shrubs among the green ones, no more than we shall find a big expanse of coleus taking the place of an emerald lawn. Green is Nature's livery, and I am borrowing an old English writer's phrase when I say that it is easy to put too many gaudy stripes and bright buttons upon this livery.

And now for our fourth tree — the little white birch, or gray birch, which we love so well in its native woods and plant so often in our home-grounds; or, if not this tree precisely, then the European cousin which closely resembles it.

This birch is not exactly an eccentric tree, but it is a peculiar tree, a very decided little tree, with a character all its own. None, perhaps, has given our landscape-gardeners more trouble. Everyone knows it, everyone likes it and wants it, and every-

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one can point to places where the general effect would be decidedly poorer without it. Therefore the artist is more often told, and the amateur is more often tempted, to plant a birch than any other conspicuous tree; and as a result it spoils as often as it helps our garden-pictures. It is not a weak tree in the injurious sense that we give the term when we use it of the weeping willow; but it is a very delicate and pliant, graceful and feminine tree—"the lady of the woods," as a poet called it long ago; and its shining trunk and twinkling leaves make it very restless. It is too nerveless in build and too undecided in outline to look well standing alone, and it is too vivacious to look well against a background composed, for instance, of sugar-maples or beeches. Its place is just the place in which a gardener's tree, like the purple beech, ought never to stand. It should be planted as nearly as possible in the way that Nature plants it. It belongs on the edge of a mingled growth of trees and shrubs forming a natural-looking wood, in a rocky glen, or on a roughish slope. Among the wild pines and hemlocks, tupe-

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los and oaks of eastern New England it is beautifully effective; and, when a tree is profusely used by Nature in our neighborhoods, Nature should be our guide if we want to use it in our pleasure-grounds.

The canoe-birch is not so fragile and graceful and feminine as its small gray cousin; but its pure white trunk, contrasting with its dark green leaves, make it even more conspicuous. Where the gray birch may stand, it also may often stand; and a fine specimen sometimes looks well in isolation too.

XIV

A Word for the Axe

“ As Paradise (though of God’s own Planting) was no longer Paradise than the Man was put into it, to dress it and to keep it, so nor will our Gardens . . . remain long in their perfection unless they are also continually cultivated.”

—*John Evelyn.*

“ A garden must be looked unto and dressed, as the body.”

—*George Herbert.*

XIV



IS it true that those who make a nation's songs influence it more than those who make its laws? I am tempted to think so whenever I hear a line of "Woodman, spare that tree;" and also to think that songs, like other forces, may work most vigorously in unprescribed directions. This homely lyric has not softened the hearts of our woodmen, and we might wish it daily sung to most of our public officials, from the congressman down to the village highway-commissioner. But I am sure that it has softened thousands of hearts which ought to have been steeled instead. I am sure it excuses to themselves thousands of owners of trees which are worthless, or worse than worthless, and yet are piously preserved. I am sure it has helped to deepen the popular feeling that a tree, as such, is a sacred object, and that to cut one down which might be preserved is to com-

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mit a crime. But a tree is a tree in the same sense only that a book is a book. Even a beautiful tree ought sometimes to be felled in the interests of beauty, just as an essentially moral book ought sometimes to be taken out of the hands of good children.

A fine tree which does not seriously interfere with the worth of more important things ought, of course, to be preserved even at a considerable sacrifice of money or convenience. It is the slow product of many years of Nature's bounty working under favorable conditions. It is a precious inheritance from the past, and should be transmitted to posterity with as keen a sense of its artistic value as though it were a famous picture or statue. But when a fine tree does interfere with the beauty of something else, then their rival claims should be carefully weighed, and, if the tree prove the lighter in the balance, it should be sacrificed as willingly as one would scrape a second-rate painting off a wall if Michael Angelo's hand were waiting to cover it afresh. Our attitude toward trees to-day is not rationally artistic; it is purely sentimental. Not once in twenty

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times does an owner recognize the fact when his pleasure-grounds need to be relieved of a tree ; and when he does recognize it, not once in twenty times is he courageous enough to sharpen and swing his axe.

When a tree stands in ornamental grounds, the question whether or no it is a fine specimen is less important than the question whether it helps or hurts the general effect of the grounds, whether it enhances or detracts from the beauty of neighboring things—whether, in short, it stands where it ought to stand or where something else, or nothing at all, should exist.

If a conspicuous group of trees is inharmonious in form or color, and could be made harmonious by the removal of one or more individuals, there should be no question as to their removal, no matter what intrinsic claims they may have to admiration. It may often be a difficult task to decide which ones to sacrifice ; but it is a task that should be entered upon without sentimental, superstitious compunctions. A bleeding stump may almost make a heart bleed for the moment,

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but the wound will be quickly healed by the increased beauty of the trees which remain. In like manner, when a single tree or a whole group is detrimental in a wider way,—when it hides a still more beautiful tree or group, or a fine middle distance, or a lovely stretch of horizon, when it hides anything which would be of distinctly more value than itself in the scene, or when it gives an uncomfortable look of crowding and of excluding air and light,—then it should be sacrificed. And a like result will be sure to follow : quick forgetfulness of the vanished charm will come with the revelation of still greater charms.

It is impossible to take even the shortest country or suburban walk without seeing places which would be conspicuously improved if some of their trees were felled. Yet even when the benefits of their removal are foreseen by the owner, how difficult it is to persuade him to fell them ! The house may be damp and dark from overshadowing ; finer trees may be concealed from sight ; a delightful prospect may be shut off ; injury may be worked in half a dozen ways, and

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yet, because he "loves his trees," they must remain. If he really loved trees, and really cared for beauty in general, it would hurt him more to see a tree palpably out of place than not to see it at all.

If this super-sentimental feeling protected only fine trees one could at least comprehend its existence. But quite as often it protects the most feeble, ill-grown, and ugly specimens. Hundreds of Norway spruces, for instance, and of exotic pines, so far decayed that they are all but dead, disfigure our parks and cemeteries. No one professes to admire them or to think that they may improve. Yet there is sure to be an outcry if their remnant of life is threatened. They are trees, and therefore sacred ; their sanctity is not impaired by the fact that they are moribund, any more than by the fact that, even if they were flourishing, the general effect of the scene would be better without them ; whatever they are, however they stand, he is a heartless vandal who says, Cut them down. And it is the same in private grounds : one daily wonders why this or that perishing tree is preserved, and accepts

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in a spirit far from acquiescent the answer,
Because I am fond of trees.

It is time that this foolish sort of sentimentality should be recognized for what it is—an actual drawback to the growth of a genuine, intelligent appreciation of trees and of landscape-beauty in general. No real love for Nature can develop among us until we distinctly understand the difference between the fine and the inferior things which Nature grows. And we shall not greatly advance in gardening art until we are clearly convinced that general beauty is more important than the beauty of any individual object, and are firmly determined to act—carefully and discreetly but boldly too—upon this conviction.

Yet still I have not named the most unfortunate effect of our weak dislike to cutting trees. The spirit which refuses the axe when it is plainly demanded in the interests of general beauty, is just as obstinate when it is demanded in the interests of the trees themselves. Every walk we take through public parks or private grounds shows us, not only

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many cases where beauty of general effect is injured by superfluous trees, but quite as many where the trees themselves are injured by overcrowding. Trees which have started spontaneously, or have been carefully planted by a landscape-gardener in such a way that, while young, they agreeably clothed the spot and usefully nursed each other, have been allowed to grow into spindling groves or tangled thickets which are not beautiful as a whole and contain not a single satisfactory specimen of tree-development.

Here, for example, is a solid clump which has no beauty of outline and no variety of light and shadow, and in which the colors of the different species are mixed in a confusion that is not true contrast. Thinned out in time, we might have had instead a smaller number of fine specimens, each graceful in form, each contrasting agreeably in color with its neighbors, and all together making a group or a little wood which would have pleased, not only by its beautiful outlines, but by its evidence of healthy and luxuriant growth.

Here, again, is a line of trees which

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was intended to form a screen to shut out some unsightly object, or to conceal the limits of the place. When first planted it did form such a screen, although of inconsiderable height, and with judicious thinning it might have remained a screen while its height increased. But left unthinned, with no room to spread its branches and no light and air for their nourishment, it has grown into a spindling row of bare stems which carry poorly developed heads of foliage far in the upper air, while between them the undesirable object can be plainly seen.

In still another place we find two or three trees growing so close together that their branches meet and the growth of each has been checked on the side toward its neighbor. Then, if the trees are of the same species, they may look well if they stand so very close that the effect is that of a single handsome head supported by two or three trunks. But even when they are of the same species they look badly if they stand so far apart that we realize we have several poorly grown specimens where we might have had a single one in beautiful development. And the

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effect is distressing indeed when they are of alien, inharmonious kinds. This is not an uncommon sight. It is not uncommon to find even a tapering evergreen and a round-headed deciduous tree growing so close to one another that their branches interlock, and their discordant forms and colors and textures are welded together in a union as unnatural to the mind as displeasing to the eye.

These words for the axe have often been spoken before. In all lands, in all times, thoughtless persons have probably held it criminal, under any avoidable circumstances, to cut down a tree; and so the whole literature of gardening art echoes the complaint of the modern artist—the cry that no difficulty with which he has to cope is so great as the difficulty of making an owner thin out his plantations at the proper time and in the proper way. Brown, the famous English landscape-gardener of the eighteenth century, has been bitterly abused by later generations because he bequeathed them multitudes of close, round, hard clumps of trees,

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spotted about on lawns and meadows. But there is no doubt that he intended these clumps to be thinned so that they would eventually resolve themselves into lighter, more varied, graceful, and naturalistic groups. When we read of "Brown's clumps" as objects which the planter of to-day should be careful not to imitate, it is not Brown himself who is really put in the pillory. It is not Brown, but his clients; and like unto them have been almost all the landscape-gardener's clients in our own America.

It should be remembered that no landscape-gardener can protect himself against a fate like Brown's by planting only those trees which he would like to see in the full-grown group or wood. In the first place, few owners would be content to see their grounds, for a long period, merely dotted over with small isolated trees; in the second place, young trees must often be planted closely for mutual protection against wind and cold; and in the third place, no one can predict with accuracy how any given tree will grow, and so a margin must be left

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against possible contingencies, not only of life and death, but of peculiarity in development. A planter can hardly imagine in detail the group he wants, and then plant for that group and for nothing else. The best he can do is to decide upon the general size and character of his group; plant in such a way that the probability of getting something near to it in effect will be insured; and then watch his plantation and thin it out in accordance, on the one hand, with his own wishes, and, on the other hand, with the idiosyncrasies of his developing trees.

Of course, such a process as this needs care and thought and taste. But it is just this fact that I want to impress upon my readers—the fact that only by the exercise of care and thought and taste, not merely in the act of planting but continually afterward, can beautiful results be achieved in any branch of gardening art. When a plantation has been made, then the real work of creating it has but just begun; this work must be prolonged for many years to preserve the beauty of the trees as individ-

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uals, no less than to preserve the beauty of the general effect of the scene ; and it must very often consist in larger part of the judicious cutting-out of individuals which are not only superfluous but detrimental. Yet the hardest task of an artist is to persuade an owner to cut down trees which were never intended long to remain. Generally it is harder still for an owner to persuade himself to sacrifice trees of his own planting, even though, by his own confession, they might much better be out of the way. And when the owner is indefinitely multiplied until he becomes a public, then indeed the cause of the beneficent axe often seems well-nigh hopeless.

Central Park, and Prospect Park in Brooklyn, are merely examples of a condition of things which is common throughout the public pleasure-grounds of America. They need nothing to make them wholly admirable except that their trees should be thinned ; this they need in the most pitiful fashion ; yet never in the public's sight is one tree cut, whether it be fine or ugly, alive or dead, that an outcry is not raised.

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Scores of people seem to have nothing to do but watch for the superintendent's axe and, when they see it gleam, protest to him or his workmen, to the park-commissioners, or to the public through the newspapers. Often they protest on general principles, professing to know nothing of trees except that they should never be cut down. Sometimes they are a little more explicit; they know the names of certain trees, they like to lounge out of doors in pleasant weather, and so they call themselves lovers of Nature and explain at length how their feelings have been outraged.

I have heard and read a multitude of such protests. I have never met with one which recognized that a park is an artistic organism, a complex thing of beauty, and that, therefore, if it is to be kept beautiful, other things than the intrinsic excellence of this tree or that must be considered. I have never met with one which gave a valid reason why any "slaughtered" tree should not have been slaughtered, while I have never walked through either of our parks with a person who knew anything of art or any-

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thing of trees, without listening to lamentations that the axe had not been much more freely used.

There are literally thousands of trees in Central Park which ought to come down. If they do not, the beauty of the park fifty or even ten years from now will be far less than it is to-day. But when a single one is condemned the chopper is wise who gets him up very early in the morning; a little later he may come almost into personal conflict with some foolish enthusiast who "loves trees." No such enthusiast, I am sure, has any idea how many thousands of trees have already been cut in Central Park without his knowledge. He has never missed them although, probably, he has recognized the increased beauty of the spot where they once stood. If he could be told about them and made to remember just how their sites used to look, perhaps he might understand a little of the meaning of good art and good tree-culture—just enough to make him stop a moment, when next he sees a sharpened axe, and question whether its wielding may not do a great deal more good than harm.

XV

The Love of Nature

“Though we travel the world over to find beauty,
we must carry it with us or we find it not. . . .
The difference between landscape and landscape is
small, but there is a great difference in beholders.
There is nothing so wonderful in any landscape as
the necessity of being beautiful under which every
landscape lies.”

—*Emerson.*

XV



ALL human beings draw pleasure from Nature in an instinctive way. They enjoy fresh air, sunshine, and open outlooks ; they prefer a blue sky to a gray one, and will confess that a green landscape is pleasanter to the eye than grimy pavements, even though for other reasons they may prefer to live in town.

Such likings as these prove no love of Nature ; they are almost purely physical ; sentiment has little more to do with them than with the pleasure of an animal basking in the sun. But the majority of people, even among the uncultivated classes, have a deeper feeling for Nature than this, and appreciate something of its beauty. Stupid and brutalized indeed is the man or woman who does not notice a brilliant bed of flowers, or would not be impressed by the sight of a great mountain-chain. On Sundays

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our parks are crowded with very poor people who spread through every quiet walk and shadowy glade, and like nothing so well as to lie or saunter on the grass ; and although much of their pleasure is simply physical, anyone who has sympathetically mingled with them knows that part of it is of finer quality. The beauty of the landscape speaks to even the dumbest eye, and appeals through it to the most sluggish imagination. The roughest cockney admires the beauty of the shores of the Hudson when he sees them on some summer excursion, and is impressed by the splendor of the sea when for the first time he stands on a shore where its waves are breaking.

This instinctive admiration for the charms of the natural world is what many people understand by the love of Nature. But it is not, in any true sense, the love of Nature. It is merely a love for natural things which are beautiful, of course, but which are also unfamiliar and therefore striking. Let the dweller in tenement-houses inhabit a lodge in Central Park for a while, and he would probably seek his Sunday entertain-

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ment in a down-town street. Let him work on a North River schooner, and he would quickly forget to notice the beauty of the shores.

And this same attitude toward Nature may be observed in persons of much wider cultivation. To them also familiar natural things soon grow uninteresting. The artisans who crowd our Park on Sunday enjoy its beauty more than do most of the wealthier folk who drive there every day. It is curious to notice how few of these ever seem to look at anything but the people in the other carriages, and how seldom they turn from the fashionable East Drive into the much more beautiful West Drive. And it is still more curious to find that scores of them, who have made pilgrimages in search of natural beauty from the Nile to the Sierras and from the St. Lawrence to Mexico, have never left their carriages to see what the pathways in their own park might reveal. The Ramble is as unknown to them as though it lay in China, and they exclaim in surprise if you tell them they might travel a thousand miles and see nothing prettier.

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People of this kind, I say, do not care about Nature ; at most they care for those conspicuous natural effects which they call scenery. Scenery is not the whole of natural beauty; it is only one manifestation of it; and a person who delights in a magnificent view but finds all flat regions hopelessly tiresome, or who feels the grandeur of a rocky coast but not the loveliness of a green-fringed, quiet shore, is in a rudimentary stage of development. His attitude is like that of one who should profess to love flowers but, while admiring a rose, should despise a forget-me-not. The true lover of Nature is he who gives interested attention to all natural effects and forms, and finds much beauty where the average eye finds none.

Of course there are grades and degrees of natural beauty, and for each the true lover will have a corresponding degree of admiration. He will not call a Belgian plain as beautiful as the valley of the Rhone, or declare that a nettle has the charm of a branch of apple-blossoms. But there are few plants which have no beauty of any kind ; and there are few earthly spots, where man's

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hand has not obliterated Nature's intentions, so devoid of attraction that the sensitive eye and mind cannot enjoy them keenly.

Admiration, says a French writer on art, "is the active, æsthetic form of curiosity." And this means that he who really admires the works of God will be lovingly curious about the hyssop on the wall as well as about the cedar of Lebanon, and will see more to please him in a rough bit of pasture-land than the average person sees in a whole fertile valley. Who can love Nature better than the landscape-painter, spending his whole life in the effort to transfer her features to his canvas? But no one is less in need than the landscape-painter of what is called scenery. It is not he who greatly prefers the cañon of the Yellowstone to the banks of the little river near at hand. When he is brought face to face with scenic grandeurs he appreciates them more keenly than anyone else, but he gladly comes back to his quiet plains, his placid pools, his little forest-glades. Nor is it merely because these things are better fitted for painting than grander things. Any little corner of the

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world is enough for him, as a thing to enjoy no less than as a thing to paint. Delacroix was not a landscape-painter, so we cannot suspect him of professional bias; and there has never been a painter whom we could more easily credit with an inborn love for striking and even spectacular kinds of beauty. But fine scenery was not essential to his enjoyment of Nature. "The poorest little alley," he wrote one day from a shabby suburb of Paris, "with its straight little leafless saplings, in a dull and flat horizon, can say as much to the imagination as the most bepraised of sites. This tiny cotyledon piercing the earth, this violet shedding its first whiff of perfume, are enchanting. I love such things as much as the pines of Italy."

This is the voice of the true lover of Nature, and like it was Corot's voice, constantly praising, not the grandeurs which he had seen on his travels, but the tender, gentle, subtle beauties around his home at Ville d'Avray, and, more than anything else, the humblest of them all—"my leaves and my little birds." If one is born to love

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Nature as those men did and all true artists do, or if he ever learns the beneficent lesson, the quietest scenes will impress him, the most familiar will be ever new. The shadow of a blackberry-vine as it trails over a gray rock, will give him as delightful an emotion as the sight of a great mountain; and custom will not stale his pleasure, for it will be as infinitely varied, as perpetually renewed, as the leaves on the trees, the blades of grass in the fields, the tints in the sunset skies.

People who run about, summer after summer, in search of new landscapes to admire, will often tell you that it is because they love Nature. But if they did they would be much less apt to run about; they could exercise their passion within narrower limits, and they would be likely to content themselves within such limits because a particular love for particular beauties would result from long acquaintance with them.

In Mrs. Robbins's "Rescue of an old Old Place," she rightly says that one of the great benefits which spring from the posses-

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sion of a bit of country soil is the development of the love of home, the suppression of that restless desire for change which makes of so many Americans "possible tramps" instead of established citizens. But a genuine love for Nature may serve a person pretty well in place of the actual ownership of land; for in whatever corner of the country he may chance to live, he will see, understand, and appreciate every part and phase of its beauty, and thus, in a sense, feel himself the owner of the whole region; and the oftener he visits it, the stronger and more intimate will become his attachment, his feeling of possession. Of course he will not be without a keen desire to see as much of the big world as possible, and to learn how many kinds of beauty it can show. But this desire will not be the imperious need for "a change" which is felt by less fortunate souls; and often it will be so much weaker than his wish to stay among the things which he knows best that year after year will pass and foreign lands, or even neighboring country-sides, will tempt in vain while he watches new clouds blow over

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his familiar hills, new flowers spring up in his familiar woods, and every long-loved shrub and tree assume new aspects with each season's growth and alterations. The changes which Nature brings every moment before his eyes will satiate his desire for novelty.

This is the true secret of every kind of love: if a thing really appeals to us, the better we know it the more we care about it. The true lover of Nature loves her as he loves mankind. He has his favorite corners of the world as he has his friends, and does not constantly wish to exchange them for others, or perpetually contrast their attractions with the attractions of others. If everyone admires them his joy in them is increased; but if he is almost alone in his appreciation, this fact is in itself the source of a special kind of pleasure and pride. He seeks for novelty and freshness in Nature as he likes to make acquaintance with interesting strangers, but comes back as gladly to the familiar scene as to the familiar face. The tree which he has watched as it grew from a sapling to fine

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maturity, delights him even more than a finer tree about which no memories or hopes are clustered, for even if he has not planted and watered it himself, even if it grows in the neighboring forest instead of his own field, he loves it with a personal, proprietary affection. When he drives through a beautiful new country his eyes are perpetually charmed; but when he drives through the roads around his home his heart is touched and his imagination is stirred by the beauty of past years as well as by the beauty of to-day, and by the hope that next year's beauty also may belong to him. Each tree is a friend, each bush has a special message for his special ear, each flower is greeted as the child of other flowers which he knew last summer in the same corner of the roadside. He not only admires what he sees—he is interested by everything he sees in a sense that is impossible where things are beheld for the first time. And true love, if it means admiration, means interest also, whether inanimate things or human beings are in question.

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Therefore, one who truly loves Nature does not need what are commonly called fine views ; he needs no great ranges of mountains, picturesque stretches of rocky coast, or outlooks over wide expanses of valley, hill, and river. Every view not seriously marred by some incongruous work of man has its charm for his eyes. And he recognizes, moreover, that a very fine view must often be bought at the expense of other beauties. If, for instance, there are mountains around him, he cannot have that far, low horizon-line which, stretching its mighty curve at a seemingly immeasurable distance, gives an unequalled sense of space, freedom, and infinity. " I have never seen the sky before," a painter once exclaimed who had passed his life in hilly regions and now for the first time stood in the flat, quiet country near Cape Cod ; " I did not know that it was so vast or so near or so round, or that there were so many stars, or that a sight of them all could be so magnificent. I never before watched the moon come up from below the earth instead of merely from behind the hills ; and I never saw the whole of a sunset until

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I came here.''' And he seemed to think that the panorama of the morning and evening and midnight heavens was as admirable as any terrestrial panorama which could be unrolled.

Again, in our crude and often maltreated land, grandeur in the distance often means a forlorn raggedness in the foregrounds, and a sensitive eye thinks the foreground of a picture as important as its background. Where forests have ruthlessly been cut away, and where there is not a rich soil to encourage neat and careful methods of cultivation, primeval beauty has largely vanished and the beauty of civilization has not taken its place. The true lover of Nature will feel this painfully, and all the magnificence of the mountains beyond may not compensate him for the lack of that harmonious repose in general effect which comes when all parts of a picture are in keeping.

I do not say that the true lover of Nature cares nothing for grand scenery—only that he does not actually need it. Great things impress him, but small ones content him, and he gathers pleasure from the roadside grass as well as from the giant oak or the sky-line

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of a rugged mountain-range. There is a beauty of the lily and a beauty of the pine, a beauty of the mountain and a beauty of the plain, a beauty of wide outlooks, of stately, high-walled amphitheatres, and of gentle, sequestered corners. One kind necessarily excludes the other kinds ; but that does not matter if each arrests the eye, interests the mind, and appeals to the imagination and the heart.

Everyone realizes that more kinds of art appeal to the connoisseur than to the ordinary observer, and that he does not exalt showy, spectacular kinds above all others. All the greatest artists in the world did not paint palace-ceilings or big altar-pictures ; some of the world's most famous masterpieces measure only a couple of spans and do not show a single note of vivid color. And so it is with Nature and her masterpieces. The finest composition wrought with mountain-peaks and deep ravines is not more beautiful or wonderful than one which can be wrought with a gray boulder, a pine-tree, and a carpet of moss or fern ; the most splendid panoramic background is not more enchanting than may be a foreground of flowery meadow,

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with a middle distance of woodland, and no background at all except the luminous sky.

Of course some people are born with a deep and true love for Nature, but even in them I think this love does not show itself very early in life. In the majority of cases it seems to have been gradually developed rather than spontaneously felt. And, while no one not born with a poet's soul can ever learn to feel Nature's charms as a Corot or a Wordsworth did, anyone can learn to see them pretty clearly unless his mind is hopelessly sluggish, desperately prosaic.

How can such knowledge be acquired? One way, as I have said in speaking of trees, is to study fine landscape-pictures. Another is the landscape-painter's own way. The practice of painting, even in the most untrained, amateurish fashion, may be an excellent help toward the development of a love for Nature. If an intelligent young girl would spend an hour a day, during a single summer, faithfully trying to set down in paint what she sees in Nature—now a flower or a tree, now a bit of sunset-sky, a corner of

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a hedge-row, or a little stretch of river-bank—she would find at the end of the season that she had gained new eyes. She would see a thousand things she had never seen before, find beauty in many that before had seemed ugly, and realize the difference between merely “liking” Nature and truly appreciating it. It would not matter if all her studies were failures and were torn up in disgust as fast as they were finished. She would have attained a great end, achieved a real success; for she would have enlarged her own powers of enjoyment to the sweetening and dignifying of all the rest of her life. Much amateur sketching is done in this country every summer, but I fear it is not often done in this spirit. The aim is to produce pretty pictures, not to cultivate the painter’s own intelligence. And while the aim generally remains unattained, intelligence is scarcely increased; for, as the prettiness of the sketch has been the ruling motive, a subject has most often been chosen because it was easy to do, not because it was particularly interesting in itself, and it has been superficially looked at, not lovingly studied.

XVI

A Word for Books

“When science is learned in love and its powers are wielded by love they will appear the supplements and continuance of the material creation.”

—*Emerson.*

XVI



ANOTHER way to develop a love for Nature is to ask the aid of books. Writers like Thoreau, Jefferies, and Burroughs not only paint beautiful pictures for our mental eye, but stimulate our powers of actual observation ; they tell us what they have seen, and thus tell us what to look for in our turn. And artists' biographies are full of hints and guiding-threads, while now and then a painter, like Fromentin, writes descriptions which are as wonderful as Thoreau's and, by their very unlikeness to a naturalist's descriptions, greatly assist these in enlarging our appreciative sense. But to enlarge this as widely and as quickly as possible, there is no helper so good as a botanical handbook.

A singular misunderstanding of the purpose and results of botanical study seems to prevail among intelligent Americans. I do

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not know that I can illustrate it better than by quoting a paragraph printed not long ago in a children's magazine which, month by month, devotes several pages to out-door things with the professed desire that our young folk may be led to study Nature for themselves in her woods and fields.

This paragraph began with a reference to some previous article in which a familiar little plant had been called *Epigæa repens* instead of trailing-arbutus or May-flower; and then it said :

If we begin to use the scientific names, where shall we stop ? The next thing will be to call the delicate spring-beauty, *Claytonia Virginica*. . . . (By the way, the botanists seem to have had a hobby for calling things after Virginia and Carolina and Canada ; when they got tired of using these they named all the rest of the plants after foreign travellers.) But there is worse yet to come. . . . The truth is that the botanists themselves sometimes have two or three names for the same plant. . . . And just think how we have been twitted with having different common names in different parts of the country ! Since I can remember, the dear little bluets were named *Oldenlandia cœrulea*. Afterward they were changed back to *Houstonia cœrulea* by the great Mr. Gray himself. How much

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simpler just to call the pretty things bluets ! The truth is, my dears, that the Latin names make a herbarium look very learned ; and when you collect one I hope you will take great pains to have the plants properly labelled. But what would your poets do with *Houstonia carulea* in their verses ? I do not think such terms are suitable for the finer uses of life and literature ; so I hope you children all will take pains to learn the common names of the flowers. I only wish you could tell me every one ; but perhaps someone will yet make a dictionary of them.

I do not think that more misleading counsels can ever have been conveyed in a paragraph as short as this.

In the first place, it implies that, as a class, the scientific names of plants are less agreeable to the ear than the vernacular names. But is milkwort prettier than polygala, or woad-waxen than genista, or tick-trefoil than desmodium, or false-indigo than baptisia, or false-mitrewort than tiarella ? Which would a poet prefer to say—sweetgum or liquidambar, pepperidge or nyssa, fetid-marigold or dysodia, sneeze-weed or helenium, shin-leaf or pyrola ? And would he really object very much even to claytonia

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or houstonia? Of course a list pointing the other way might be compiled as easily as this one could be greatly extended. I do not mean to say that all scientific plant-names are musical and all vernacular ones are ugly; only that the balance of beauty is perhaps in favor of the scientific names, and that it is certainly foolish to arraign them as a whole from the euphonic standpoint.

It is still more foolish, however, to imply that a hard and fast line can be drawn between the two classes of names. If we refuse to be "scientific," what shall we call a dahlia, or an aster, a wistaria, a fuchsia, an azalea, a chrysanthemum, a rhododendron, or a sassafras? Must we call an arethusa and a calypso each simply an orchid to avoid scientific terminology? And, again, is calypso or arethusa a name unfit for poetic or any other "fine" kind of use?

The children who read this paragraph ought to have been given very different lessons. They should have been told that no line can be drawn between the two classes of plant-names; that sometimes the scientific name is perfectly familiar and common and, in-

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deed, is the only one the plant has ever borne ; that sometimes there is another which is common in the sense of being English, but not in the sense of being more familiar even to non-scientific ears ; that sometimes the botanical and the vernacular names differ only through the change of a letter or two, as with orchid, heliotrope, lily, and gentian ; that sometimes, of course, the vernacular name is so well known and sufficient that even a botanist does not use the other in conversation or ordinary writing ; and finally, that the specific botanical name need not always be tacked to the generic—even a botanist does not say *claytonia virginica* when *claytonia* would do as well, or refuse to speak of a *houstonia* without adding the *cœrulea*.

Then, would it not have been better to explain why botanical names have sometimes been duplicated than simply to jeer at the fact? Does not the fact that so many of them refer to Carolina, Virginia, and Canada seem interesting instead of ludicrous if one understands that they were bestowed at a time when European botanists knew little

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more about America than that it included these three provinces? And is there not a very interesting significance in the use of a personal appellation when it is recognized as referring to the first discoverer or describer of a plant?

Again, these children should have been told that the more anxious they are to learn all the common names of plants, the more needful it is that they should learn their scientific names. How often, when we discover a strange wild flower, or even a new garden-flower, do we find anyone to tell us its English name? But any book on botany will tell it, if we know how to determine its scientific name. "Perhaps someone will make a dictionary" of common plant-names, says the author of our foolish paragraph. This is just what has been done by botanists in their handbooks, and what can never be done by any other method than theirs; for how can a plant be painted so that its right to a name is made plain, except by means of the precisely descriptive terms which botanists employ? Any person who has even the most superficial acquaintance with his

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“Gray’s Manual” knows the vernacular names of our plants far better, I am sure, than the most enthusiastic flower-lover who has scorned all scientific aid.

I am sorry to say that it is not only an occasional writer for children who thinks in this crude, vague fashion that systematic knowledge must lessen the love for natural beauty. Very many people, intelligent in other matters, are quick upon all occasions to jeer at botanical study and to discourage its pursuit even in its simplest and most attractive forms. They would be shocked if charged with indifference to knowledge of other kinds, but they seem to consider the desire to study botany a foolish endeavor to pry into a subject so profound that only a smattering of it can ever be acquired ; a smattering of knowledge they declare to be worse than entire ignorance ; and they also insist that the more one learns about plants the less he will appreciate their beauty. The scientific attitude is held up as the reverse of the attitude of enjoyment ; scientific knowledge is proclaimed to be

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deadly to artistic or poetic feeling. "Why," it is often said by those who should speak more wisely, "can anyone want to pull flowers to pieces to learn their hideous Latin names? What is the good of it in the end, and must it not destroy all sense for that charm which we, in our happy ignorance, enjoy so keenly?" No one believes that a knowledge of astronomy destroys all pleasure in the splendor of the midnight sky, or a knowledge of geology all interest in the grandeur and variety of the earth's surface. But trees and flowers must not be studied unless the student is willing to exchange the pleasure of the eye for whatever barren satisfaction he may find in hard names and withered, dissected specimens.

It is probable that one cause of this odd belief is the idea that to study botany means simply to learn Latin names, and that the knowledge of these names is its own only end and aim. If this were true, botany would indeed be a dry and not very useful study, although there would still be some benefit in being able to speak of plants, to men of any nation, exactly instead of inexactly, and

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to speak of any possible plant instead of a comparatively restricted number. But to learn Latin names is only the first step in learning to know the plants they represent—a needful step, but in no sense an end or aim.

The names of plants are important in the same way as the names of people. We must discover a stranger's name if we are to identify him, to realize his relationships, his place in society, and his rôle in the world, to remember his individuality, and gain more information by speaking about him with others. To a person who knows nothing of botany, the trees and flowers which he calls familiar are like the attractive faces that meet him day after day in the street—unnamed faces representing lives and souls which are hidden from his ken. But to one who has some knowledge of botany, familiar plants are like intimate friends, and unfamiliar ones like interesting strangers with whom he can immediately make acquaintance.

In studying botany we learn first such facts as we already know with regard to human beings. We learn what plants are, how they are born, live, and grow, and what

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is meant by their nearer or more distant degrees of relationship—how and why they are grouped in what may be called families, clans, communities, and nations. And then, when a simple handbook can be so used that after examining a plant we can find its name, all its other characteristics may be read at a glance. Finding its name, we discover the manner of its growth, the traits which ally it with its relatives and those which constitute its personality, the regions where it is common or rare, the nature of the spots in which it may be sought most hopefully, and the seasons of its blooming and its fruiting. All this is worth knowing, even at the cost of dealing for the moment with the very ugliest of Latin names. And if a man or a child has any æsthetic susceptibility, his field of enjoyment will be greatly widened by such knowledge. If a child finds a rosy arethusa with twin blossoms, will his pleasure in its beauty be decreased by knowing that twin-flowered arethusas are very rare? Or if he discovers that the pretty little bunch-berry which carpets some recess in the woods is first-cousin to the big

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flowering-dogwood, and discovers too the reasons why, will not his interest in it be increased? And will it seem less charming to him as it grows more interesting? Let him learn why an orchid is an orchid—why the tiny ladies'-tresses in the field deserve the name as much as the gorgeous cattleya or oncidium of the greenhouse, and he has learned something which surely cannot decrease his enjoyment of the beauty of either.

But to do this, you say, beautiful flowers must be pulled to pieces, and this will "deaden the sense of beauty." By no means. The truth is quite the other way. No one who has not once pulled a flower of a given kind to pieces can fully realize how beautiful it is. All its beauty is not in its larger features or on the outside of its cup. In the interior, in the hidden recesses where the great work of reproduction goes on in a myriad different ways each more marvellous than the other, resides a great part of the beauty of all flowers, and the major part of the beauty of not a few. Even if it led to nothing but a knowledge of the delight which Nature takes in making the tiniest features

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of her products lovely to behold, the close examination of floral structures would be well worth many hours of a busy man's time. Once this has been learned, we do not need always to see it. Then, seeing the flower as a whole, we not only know its name, habits, and relationships, but remember its structure. The exterior suggests the interior, and a knowledge of the interior explains the reasons for the lovely individuality of the envelope.

This should suffice, I think, to prove that even a smattering of botanical knowledge is better than none at all. Archbishop Whately long ago pointed out that this word has two distinct meanings. In one sense it means a superficial acquaintance with a subject joined to a pretentious display, or at least an overweening estimate, of slight knowledge. But in the other sense it simply means that acquaintance with main facts which must be the beginning of all knowledge. Even the slightest smattering of botanical knowledge, in this latter sense, will greatly increase instead of lessening the enjoyment of any individual plant.

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But there will be a further gain. Once let a person begin to study plants and he will desire to increase the list of his acquaintances; and then he will use his eyes as he never did before. He will discover many beautiful plants of whose existence in his neighborhood he had never dreamed. He will see a hundred things where before he had seen ten. Having learned to value the beauty which is small in scale, he will seek for it instead of waiting for it to strike his eye, and will find it in the most unpromising places. He will delight in the infinitesimal blossoms on the door-weed where the passive, unawakened eye discovers no blossoms at all; and the flowers of the pig-weed, even, despised of the multitude, will be to him a treasury of interest. Nor, surely, will his new appreciation of humble charms like these lessen his feeling for the splendor of the iris he finds in the swamp, or of the turk's-cap-lily that flaunts by the wayside.

Great devotion to scientific study does, indeed, occasionally seem to kill the æsthetic sense. But this is not because science and a love of beauty are necessarily at vari-

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ance. It is simply because all men of scientific instincts have not also the æsthetic instinct, and because, moreover, the powers of the human mind are limited, and an intense absorption in one aspect of Nature may leave neither time nor strength for the consideration of another aspect. An inborn æsthetic instinct may die by atrophy while all the soul's life-blood goes to feed a scientific instinct.

But this is not always the case. I know some professional botanists who have a keener eye and a deeper feeling for Nature's beauty than any amateur botanist, not to say any ignoramus, whom I have ever met. The scientific study of plants seems to have developed their æsthetic faculties just as the serious study of art develops the landscape-painter's.

Nor am I pleading for a thorough study of botany—only for just so much knowledge of it as will clarify, stimulate, direct, and concentrate yet broaden the love of natural beauty ; for just so much as will make us feel at home amid the decorations of Nature's world, and put us on friendly terms with her

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in her gardening work and her landscape-painting.

I have named Richard Jefferies as a delightful painter of the outdoor world. He instructs us much in many ways, but I think never better than when he confesses that he had no botanical knowledge. Read his little book called "The Open Air." It proves that he was one of the closest observers of Nature who has ever written, yet that throughout his life he prided himself upon being a *dilettante*. I do not know that he would have liked this word, but it is the one which fits his case: he sturdily refused to study either science or art. Nevertheless, he was not content with his own ignorance. On every page he reveals that he was a born artist—one who noticed every faintest shade of color, effect of light, and subtlety of form, and described them in words which only an artist or an experienced student of art can fully appreciate. On the other hand, he continually shows a yearning for that exactness in knowledge which only scientific study can supply. And, as he was thus born to know both art and science, and as

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he refused to know either, he was always a discontented lover of Nature. Finding no outlet for his passion except through the inadequacy of words, he felt that his observation had no purpose: he was continually questioning why beauty exists, what it implies, and how it can be as beneficial as he blindly felt it must be. In the essay called "Wild Flowers" there are curiously contradictory passages. "The first conscious thought about wild flowers," he says, "was to find out their names—the first conscious pleasure; and then I began to see many that I had not previously noticed. Once you wish to identify them there is nothing escapes, down to the little white chick-weed of the path and the moss of the wall. . . . Plants everywhere, hiding behind every tree, under the leaves, in the shady places, beside the dry furrows of the field; they are only just behind something, hidden openly. The instant you look for them they multiply a hundred-fold."

Once you wish to identify them, he says; does it not seem as though he would immediately have turned to books for their ready

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help? But no; he confesses how hard it is to learn the names of plants from one's friends; he would like, he says, to have a botanist at hand to tell him what this thing is and that; he carries books of colored pictures around with him and mourns over their insufficiency and inaccuracy; but further than this in the path of inquiry he will not go. He has an abnormal hatred for printed facts. "If," he says, "someone tells you a plant, you know it at once and never forget it, but to learn it from a book is another matter; it does not at once take root in the mind; it has to be seen several times before you are satisfied—you waver in your convictions."

It seems odd that so patient, so loving an observer of plants was unwilling to take the trouble to read about them "several times" in order to know them, but still more odd that he felt this would be needful. It is as though he thought books were something apart from men, not as though men were speaking from their pages. Why should he have trusted the actual voice of a botanist and not his printed voice? Very certainly

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he would have trusted this, he would have felt that one may learn more quickly, more accurately, from print than from conversation, if he had ever examined the right kind of books ; for in their pages not only the name of his plant but its character, its affinities, its life-history, would at once have been spread before him.

A careless reader may be deluded by Jefferies's book into thinking that, as he enjoyed so deeply and described so well, ignorance must be a blessing. But a more careful reader will trace in every page the record of a mutilation of pleasure, a limiting of intelligence, a loss of golden opportunities, due simply to a lack of elementary scientific knowledge. Jefferies has left us a delightful series of books about Nature ; had he studied a little botany they would have been twice as delightful to us, and he would have got thrice as much delight as he did get from their making. He was always in some puzzle which he could not read—some “openly hidden” puzzle which the simplest book on botany would have read for him. His naive confession of the fact

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makes his essays often truly pathetic, and in their pathos lies a plain lesson for others. The best of his words to remember are: Once you wish to identify plants there is nothing escapes; and to these everyone who has seriously tried to identify plants will add: They can be identified only by a study of botany; no study is more pleasurable; and none is easier up to the point where the mere lover of natural beauty may be content to abandon it.

Materials for the study of botany are everywhere at hand; no travelling is needed, and no great exertion. The essential tools are few and cheap. A couple of volumes, like Gray's "Manual" and "Handbook," will give all needful introductory knowledge, full descriptions of all plants within a very wide area, and a glossary of terms to assist weak memories. With a knife, a long pin, and a common magnifying-glass the student has all he wants, unless he wants to end by being really a botanist. A few weeks of work with living things to illustrate the printed text—and of work which will seem quite like play—and any-

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one will be able to identify all the plants in the neighborhood of his home, except grasses and mosses and such small fry.

I know that what I say is true, because it is not long since I made the experiment myself. I did not want to make it, for I was very busy in other ways; and, while I never was so foolish as to think that I should enjoy less by learning more, I did not even dimly imagine how much more I should enjoy by learning a very little. Compelled by a wisely insistent friend to open my botany, I was amazed to find that the identifying of plants was quite as amusing and a great deal easier than the reading of verbal puzzles; that when one was identified it became like a personal possession, doubly beautiful, doubly interesting; and that as soon as I had identified a few, the whole aspect of the summer world was changed for me. It was as though all my life I had gone with veiled eyes among people whose language I could not speak, and now the veil had been lifted and the language explained. I really saw the things that were before me—the little as well as

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the big things, and every part and peculiarity of the biggest ones ; and I really began to appreciate them, to recognize their peculiar beauties, to feel the charm of their personalities. The green tangle by the roadside which, before, I had seen as a pretty tangle merely, now became a lovely intertwining of a dozen different shrubs and vines ; and it was only when each thus began to speak for itself to the eye that the composite beauty of the group was manifest.

You must notice each plant if you want to understand its intrinsic beauty or its value in combination with others ; to notice it you must want to know it ; and you are not likely to want to know anything until you begin to try in some systematic fashion. Once systematically begun in the pages of your book, the botany-lesson continues in your walks and drives, soon without any definite effort—just because of the new sharpness which a new degree of attention has quickly developed in your eyes. When this outdoor lesson has gone on for a while you will know by sight,

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even afar off as you get the merest glimpse of them, all the easily visible plants near your home ; and then the fruit of the lesson has become a part of your life, a part of yourself, a new sense, a new apartment opened in your brain. It means not only special knowledge of special plants, but much keener vision, more delicate powers of appreciation, a more subtle and yet a broader and richer faculty of enjoyment. And thus it is a thing that you will carry with you forever after, wherever you may go. Now for the first time you really love the beauty of Nature, because now for the first time you really see and understand the beauty of some of its component parts.

My own knowledge of botany is a smattering indeed, and part of it I forget from one summer to another. But the fruit of it I would not exchange for any acquirement which has cost me a hundred-fold the amount of time and trouble. This cost me only such odd hours as I could spare each day during a single busy summer. It does not enable me to know a quarter of all the plants I see when I leave my own little corner of

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the summer world ; but it does enable me really to see every plant which grows in any place, and really to appreciate its peculiar beauties. Even my poor little smattering has done so much for me, and even as regards pleasure of the most strictly æsthetic sort, that I wonder how anyone who has no smattering can think that he enjoys Nature at all.

What is true with regard to botany is true, of course, in a similar way, with regard to geology. A smattering of geology will teach one only a very little about rocks and stones, and about the outlining and massing of the giant framework over which Nature spreads her carpet of plants ; but even this very little knowledge, with the new sharpness of eye which will be its fruit, will make one's sense for the beauty of rock and soil-formations immeasurably broader and immeasurably more acute.

“ The true lover of Nature,” said William Blake, “ can see a world in a grain of sand and heaven in a wild flower.” But such a power of seeing is not given to many persons at their birth. Eyes are of very little

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value to most of us until we have learned to use them. And the best way to learn to use our eyes is not idly to cast them about, even though this may give us pleasure, but to try to discover what there is to be seen in the world, and then to try to perceive it all. Only thus can we grow wise in Nature's beauty; but, I say, to grow wise in this sense we need not grow learned in a scientific sense. A mere smattering of knowledge, if it is accurate as far as it goes, will open the eyes to facts and the beauty of facts, and will make a solid basis for the further knowledge which will be almost unconsciously acquired. Once a little science has been "learned in love," once the channels of the soul, the feeders of the imagination, have been opened to Nature's voice, we surely go on, by a process of instinctive seeing, to a stage in æsthetic development which would never have been reached had we wandered idly about the world, thinking perhaps of beauty, but not thinking of the laws which govern it, or of the individuality of the myriad threads with which Nature weaves it on her mysterious loom.

XVII

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“The good mother Nature, when she gave many artes unto men, she made a difference also between their wittes and dispositions, that every one shoulde followe that whereunto he was most enclyned.”

—*Petrarch.*

“If delight may provoke men’s labour, what greater delight is there than to behold the earth as apparelled with plants, as with a robe of imbroidered worke, set with orient pearles, and garnished with great diversitie of rare and costly jewels? . . . The delight is great but the use greater, and joyned often with necessitie.”

—*John Gerarde.*

XVII



IN speaking thus about the cultivation of a love for natural beauty, I have by no means forgotten that the subject of my book is gardening art.

An intelligent love for Nature is, in itself, a valuable possession, but it is an indispensable possession if we want to understand the aims and appreciate the results of the artist in gardening. It not only directs the eye insistently to the details of his work, but helps us to judge of it as a whole ; for if we have any artistic instinct at all, we cannot study Nature's particulars without noticing her broad effects. The better we see individual plants, the better we see the groups which they form in the foreground of a natural picture, and the compositions into which they fall when the eye takes a wider range. As each plant becomes specialized to the perceptive sense its con-

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trast with its neighbors is appraised, and gradually we learn the laws upon which harmonies and discords depend, and realize what elements unite, and how they unite, to produce those different kinds of beauty which we call serious or picturesque, dignified or lovely, delicate or effective. And then we are ready to use this developed taste in looking at the pictures wherein man has assisted Nature.

Sterling's words are as true of this as of any other department of intellectual effort : " Will is the root, knowledge the stem and leaves, and feeling the flower." A keen, sensitive, catholic and yet reasoning feeling for works of art must be developed if we are to comprehend and enjoy them fully. The first step toward understanding the beauty produced by an artistic re-uniting of Nature's " scattered excellences," is to gain acquaintance with these excellences ; and the first step toward doing this is to unseal our eyes by learning all that we can from books and pictures, from science and art.

Few people in America, even among those who profess to love both Nature

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and art, have cultivated themselves in this way. Indeed, as I said at the beginning of my first chapter, few even recognize the existence of gardening art as such. Most of them, I fear, think that a landscape-gardener is simply a combination of an engineer and a gardener in the ordinary sense. They know that he must understand how to drain soils and conduct water, and how to build roads and make them convenient for private or public use; but they think that this is the whole of his work except to choose plants which are individually fine and place them where they will be individually effective. They do not see him as an artist who, like the architect, considers beauty and utility together, and knows that no amount of attention to details will produce beauty unless all details are arranged in accordance with some broad artistic scheme—unless they express some clear artistic ideal.

But the reform which has recently overtaken us with regard to architecture is evidently on its way along the sister path. The tasks offered to the few real artists in

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gardening whom we possess are much more numerous now than they were even ten years ago, and also much more varied. The management of very small as well as very large undertakings is more and more often confided to them instead of to chance, or to the untutored taste of a horticulturalist or an engineer. We have learned not to confound an architect with a builder, or with the carpenter who can construct pretty rustic seats and arbors; and soon, perhaps, we shall be wise enough not to confound a landscape-gardener with a mere grower of plants, or the tasks of the one with those of the other.

One great enterprise of the moment will, I am sure, have a very potent influence toward this end. I mean the World's Fair at Chicago. In its general aspect and judged from the artistic point of view, it is much more successful than any large exhibition of the past; yet the difficulties which always exist in such vast undertakings were in this case increased by the need absolutely to create a suitable site. This

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site was created by Mr. Olmsted ; in disposing it he determined the grouping of the chief buildings ; and the result of his and our architects' skill is a Fair which is not only comparable to the great Parisian one of 1889, and not only equal to it, but greatly superior.

Its excellence, moreover, has not been achieved by the imitation or even the adaptation of any precedent, but upon entirely new and original lines. Man had here to conquer Nature in one of her most recalcitrant moods—to undo her work, controvert her intentions, and produce something for which, in an artistic sense, she had not prepared. But, having conquered her, the result is more admirable as well as more individual than has been any analogous result won by a less desperate struggle. It seems a miracle that an architectural panorama of such size and splendor can have sprung into life in the short space of two years, and it is impossible to think that another spectacle of equal beauty will be created in our lifetime ; for in no other city will the designers of an exhibition

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have at command the shores and waters of a veritable ocean, and to the use which has been made of these a very large part of the beauty as well as of the individuality of our Fair is due.

Only a landscape-architect, and a very great one, could have foreseen how, by regulating that lake-overflow which seemed to others a fatally deterrent feature of the proposed site, he might turn a big, barren swamp into a palatial pleasure-ground — creating wide water-ways instead of avenues, using the excavated earth to solidify the building-sites, varying the character of these sites and water-ways, thus preparing for formal, architectonic beauty in one portion of the grounds and for irregular, picturesque beauty in another portion, and yet so associating and harmonizing the two that the transition from straight quays and canals to the broken outlines of islands and lagoons might become the finest feature of the imposing whole. But Mr. Olmsted foresaw all this, and he and his associates have done it all; and, moreover, while thus actually creating a large part of the Fair-grounds, they have

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created a large part of the vegetation which clothes it, not only turfing and ornamenting the formal terraces, but covering their newly-made islands and lagoon-shores, in the short space of two seasons, with green growing things which look as though Nature had planted them a long time ago.

I think that no individual success achieved on these Fair-grounds will be so fruitfully instructive as Mr. Olmsted's. Every visitor will see that, despite the practical character of the enterprise, artists were needed to manage it ; he will see that when architectural works are in question the ground-plan is of primary importance ; and also that in preparing it the architect requires the help of the landscape-architect. The example set by the organizers of the Fair in employing Mr. Olmsted at the very outset, and the enthusiastic recognition of his help expressed by all the artists of other kinds who have worked at the Fair, ought to bear immediate fruit all over the country, among private owners of domains wide or narrow, as well as among architects and public officials. One has only to fancy what a Fair at Chica-

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go must have been without Mr. Olmsted's preparatory aid, to understand how, in a corresponding degree, lesser enterprises may profit from similar aid.

It seems, indeed, as though after a few years our great trouble might be, not a lack of work for the landscape-gardener, but a lack of landscape-gardeners to do all our work. The architectural profession, we are told, is rapidly growing over-crowded; but its sister art counts hardly half a dozen professors of repute, and a very scanty little band of aspirants. Yet the chances for employment are already good in landscape-gardening, and are growing better year by year; and surely there is no profession whatsoever, unless it be the landscape-painter's, which suggests to the imagination so delightful an existence.

It offers the chance for a life spent largely out-of-doors, in which the love for Nature may be indulged, not as a casual refreshment, but as the very basis and inspiration for the day's work. An artist himself, the landscape-gardener works hand in hand with

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the architect, and may feel as much pride as the architect when the one has beautifully set and shown what the other has beautifully built. Broad as is the mental field which the architect may encompass, the landscape-gardener's is still wider, touching the domains of natural science and of constructional science on the one hand, and the realm of idyllic poetry on the other. André says that to master this art one ought almost to be painter and poet as well as architect and gardener. But if one cannot actually be all of these, he may feel all their impulses, and may weave all their moods and inspirations into his own peculiar product.

So truly is this craft an art that there seems, indeed, to be no artistic quality which it may not express. Color and composition are the landscape-gardener's resources as they are the painter's, mass and outline almost as they are the sculptor's. And if he cannot, like the figure-painter and the dramatic poet, represent human emotions, he does more than the landscape-painter who represents some of the things which excite these emotions—he, the crea-

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tor of landscapes, actually creates these things. Such beauties as the landscape-painter and the idyllic poet tell us about, he puts before our eyes. He owes them a debt for what their works may have taught him ; but he does not celebrate their work—it is for them to celebrate his.

When we have studied his works in their best examples, when we understand their genesis as compounds of Nature and art, and realize the skill and imagination which were needed to make them seem, not artificial compounds, but vital creations, then we may easily feel that nothing in the world is better worth celebrating. It is the right and property of all successful things, declares Emerson, to be for their moment “the top of the world.” Whatever we look at, understandingly and lovingly, seems complete and self-sufficient, including and assimilating all the powers of beauty. Then, he says, “presently we pass to some other object which rounds itself into a whole as did the first ; for example, a well-laid garden ; and nothing seems worth doing but the laying-out of gardens.” I wish that more

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of our countrymen had Emerson's catholic enthusiasm for beauty, if only because more of them might then determine upon this half-neglected art as the occupation of their lives.

But in the practice of no art can all be poetry and pleasure, sentiment and a delight in beauty; and this one means much hard, practical, out-door work, and close application to preparatory office-tasks. Nature fights in one way against her would-be improver as vigorously as in another she assists him, and human nature, in the shape of the client, is even more prone to hamper him than the architect; for, while some people realize that they know nothing of architecture, very few will confess that they know nothing of out-door beauty, even in its artistic forms.

The student of this art will never gain a mastery of beauty if he does not begin with very serious study of prosaic things. He must learn about road-building and drainage, about soils and exposures, about plants and the growing of plants, about the useful and

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ornamental treatment of water, and the improvement of ground-surfaces. He must study art as art—for the broad principles which underlie all expressions of human thought by means of design. He must learn something of the painter's aims to lay a foundation for the right management of form and color, and a great deal more about the architect's aims and methods. Then, of course, he must systematically study the art of design as involved in the various problems which his own work may present. And he must cultivate his taste and store his memory by looking very carefully at Nature's finished problems and those of the masters of his craft, while he sharpens his perception of what not to do by analyzing the results of bunglers.

As he does all this he will find that, while the other arts are useful to him, there is much they cannot teach. Think of color, for instance. When the landscape-painter wants a harmony he need plan for only one; but the gardener must remember that his colors will alter week by week, and must plan so that the scene which is beautiful in

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flowery May will be beautiful in green July, and not discordant in harlequin October. With form the labor is just as complicated. If a landscape-painter's scene composes well from one point of view it is good, for no other point of view exists. But the landscape-gardener's scene is like a sculptor's figure in the round: it must be beautiful from as many points of view as encircling footsteps may reveal.

Nor, while thinking chiefly of his general effects, can the landscape-gardener ever sacrifice his details to them, as a painter most laudably may. His public cannot be kept at a given distance. He cannot generalize his foreground and compel the eye to take chief account of what lies beyond it; or, on the other hand, make his foreground important by elaboration, generalize his middle distance, and think that layers of atmosphere will forever veil his background. What is the background of a picture seen from this point will be the foreground of a picture seen from another point. Nothing, large or small, can anywhere be slurred. He must paint as with the brush of a Velas-

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quez, but help Nature, at the same time, to paint well with her brush, more delicate than a Malbone's.

Nevertheless, I cannot say too often that a study of the art of painting will help him. Read Sir Uvedale Price "On the Picturesque," if you do not believe me; or, to gain instruction from the other side of the world, hear what a Japanese friend of mine once said. All Japanese gardeners, he declared, are artists by training and profession, yet they attempt to manage only small problems by themselves. "When a large problem is in question," he explained, "anything like one of your public parks, the general scheme is always supplied by a painter."

If the intending artist travels abroad he will find some good gardening work and a great deal that is bad. Much that once was good has perished or been seriously defaced. This century has seen the art of landscape-gardening fall to a very low ebb in both France and England. Recently it has somewhat improved again. But even when

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modern European work is good in general scheme, it is still more constantly marred than our own by the mistaken management of details. I have never seen a naturalistic park in England or France as free as is Central Park from ill-chosen, ill-placed horticultural features. Almost everyone is nearly as much defaced by them as the average large American cemetery. All kinds of inartistic gardening devices which exist in America exist in all parts of Europe, and there are some European atrocities which have not yet been imported—for instance, those stiff flower-borders, stretched beneath shorn-off shrubberies, to which I have already referred.

When we find American clients, and sometimes American artists, confusing the significance of the words landscape, park, home-grounds, garden, lawn, and trying to cram into one scheme the beauties proper to all; when we see tropical plants flaunting on lawns which should bear nothing but grass and quiet shrubs, or intruding themselves into sylvan corners which should have a native, natural, simple air; when we shudder

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at the gaudy vulgarity of our coleus-beds ; when we see pretty things huddled together in ugly masses, or ugly plants set in conspicuous solitude, sure of admiration because they are novelties—in all these cases we may comfort though not excuse ourselves by knowing that, over the water, we should see just the same things and even more of them.

The most instructive things which Europe offers to an American eye are her examples of architectonic gardening—the magnificent formalities wrought by Le Nôtre and his followers in France and Germany, the beautiful old semi-formalities of which many relics still remain in Italy, and the small city squares which modern Frenchmen design so well. Most of Europe's best lessons in naturalistic gardening can, I think, now be read in Germany. Some admirable work of this sort has recently been designed in France. But in France it is, perhaps, more often injured than in Germany by the introduction of inharmonious details. And certainly the fine traditions of the so-called English style have been much better and more generally

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preserved in Germany than in England itself. I think, however, that they are illustrated best of all in our own country, as regards the noblest problems ; and for many other reasons travel here is more indispensable to the student than travel abroad.

Nature herself speaks more directly and variously in America than in Europe, and, on the other hand, many of our artistic problems are peculiar to ourselves. Most of our country houses are differently built, placed, and surrounded from those of other countries. Our large parks and private domains are often laid out upon virgin soil instead of upon sites which have been used for other purposes, while in the west of Europe such a thing as a virgin site hardly exists. Our cemeteries are distinctive. Our cities are planned in local ways ; and, in general idea and details of arrangement, our villages and summer-colonies are like no others. Add those fundamental diversities in soil, climate, vegetation, and atmospheric effect which the artist can never for a moment forget, and it will be clear why his first travelling should be done in his own country.

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In Europe he should travel if he can, but here he must travel ; and only when he has thus learned what kind of work is wanted here, and what can well be accomplished here, will he be fitted to gather useful information abroad.

He will find many deplorable things along his home-course. But shocking examples are very useful object-lessons if analyzed for their reasons why ; and with a multitude of such examples exist many delightful things—more, in certain directions, than we can find elsewhere. If we have had but few professed landscape-gardeners, we have had two or three of signal ability ; and the untutored instinct of our people has sometimes worked as simply and felicitously as it has in England. Only in England, for instance, can we find a certain type of close-built village street, with walls embowered in vines and clasped by blossoming fruit-trees, and lovely, odorous cottage-gardens. But only in America can we find the typical New England village, with its decorous, isolated white houses flanking broad, turf-bordered streets which lie, like vast

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cathedral aisles, completely over-arched by giant elms and maples ; and this also is a sight that one might travel far to see.

Good planning, we know, is the foundation of all good gardening art. Important in the smallest problem, it is trebly important in large ones ; and nothing in the world is so instructive with regard to good planning on a very large scale as are our great public parks. In them, I think, we can learn more about the highest principles of landscape-gardening than Europe could teach. When a student can really appreciate all the excellence of one of Mr. Olmsted's parks, when he really understands its creator's ideals and methods, he has done much to fit himself for his own future work. Small problems are not very illuminative with regard to great ones ; but the way in which great ones have been managed—as a whole and in their several parts—may be infinitely helpful with regard to the smallest ; that is to say, if the student always bears in mind that, in his art as in the architect's, the virtue of virtues is fitness.

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Among all our parks Central Park is the most interesting and instructive. One or two others may be counted more beautiful, but this is because their sites were much more advantageous. The difficulties which attended the formation of Central Park give it its peculiar value. No harder task than the creation of a big pleasure-ground in the centre of the Island of Manhattan can ever be suggested to a landscape-gardener ; and, therefore, when its success is appraised, it teaches, like the Chicago Fair-grounds, the important lesson : Never despair. Moreover, while the broken, rocky character of its surface offered comparatively little chance for such wide and stately effects as delight us in Prospect Park, in Franklin Park, and in the South Park at Chicago, it was extremely favorable (given an extremely able artist) to the production of varied beauty in details. So this park shows, in a striking way, how broad beauty may be compassed under seemingly deterrent conditions, and at the same time offers an unusual assortment of those smaller beauties which are all that the landscape-

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gardener can attempt in most of his small problems.

Of course, no amount of looking at good results and studying backward the processes through which they were produced will train a student in the same way as would a course of subordinate effort upon similar tasks while they are actually in hand. Such a course depends upon the chance to enter an office like Mr. Olmsted's; and if this chance presents itself, no desire for travel or for study of other sorts should be allowed to interfere with it.

But there ought to be other opportunities for at least a theoretical training in creative work. We ought to have a school of gardening art. To-day, if a man wants to study this art he must usually be his own master. He can study painting, architecture, engineering, botany, and horticulture in this school or in that; or all of them, perhaps, at one university. But the art of design as applied to landscape, and as including the needful amount of instruction in these practical branches, is nowhere taught in Amer-

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ica. Nor do I think that it is in France or in England, although some more or less efficient teaching of it is probably practised in Germany.

It is time, indeed, that we had a good school of gardening art in America. If we had, I believe that many young men would enter it ; and we need the services of very many. It would not cost much to develop such a school in connection with a university where some of its main preparatory branches are already taught ; and I hope the day is not far off when some public-spirited citizen will awaken to the need and meet the cost.

Meanwhile, here is a motto which I should like to see engraved over the door of every architectural school in America for the instruction of students, and of every architect's office for the warning of clients. Bacon set it down nearly three hundred years ago, but neither the architect nor his public has learned it yet : "*He that builds a fair house upon an ill seat committeth himself to prison.*" He may find pleasure within his

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four walls ; but if he is a man of taste, he is shut off from pleasure the moment he crosses his threshold or looks from his window.

Think of this, good architect, before you begin your fair house, and plead the cause of your brother artist. Think of it, good client, before you decide just what kind of a fair house you want, and do not ask counsel of your architect only. And when you have secured your landscape-gardener as well as your architect, do not obtrude too much of your ignorance into the plans which their skill may provide for you. Know what you want and ask for that ; and then be content with that and do not expect, when the work is half done, that you can change its character as easily as you can change your mind—or as cheaply. Architectural work and gardening work, if they are good, may cost a great deal of money ; but the complaints we so often hear with regard to their price are frequently explained by the fact that the client has tried to get first this thing and then that, and both at the cost of one.

Human nature has not changed much in

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the course of thousands of years. "In the magnificent city of Ephesus," wrote Vitruvius, nearly nineteen centuries ago, "there was an ancient law, hard indeed, but equitable, to the effect that when an architect was entrusted with the execution of a public work, an estimate thereof being lodged in the hands of a magistrate, his property was held as security until the work was finished. If, when finished, the expense did not exceed the estimate, he was complimented with degrees and honors. So when the excess did not amount to more than one-fourth of the estimate, no punishment was inflicted. But when the excess was greater than this amount the architect was required to pay it out of his own pocket. Would that such a law existed among the Roman people, not only in respect of their public, but also of their private buildings, for then unskilful architects would not commit their depredations with impunity, and only those who were the most skilful in the intricacies of the art would practise it. Proprietors would not be led into ruin through extravagant expenditure. Architects themselves

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would be constrained to closer accuracy in their calculations, and the proprietor would complete his building for the amount, or a little more than the amount, which he expected to expend. Those who can afford a given sum for any work would cheerfully add one-fourth more in the pleasing expectation of seeing it completed ; but when they find themselves burdened with the addition of half, or even more than half, the expense originally contemplated, they lose heart, and are willing to sacrifice what has been already laid out."

Thus we see that the Romans were a good deal like ourselves, and that the wonderful legal system of Rome, like the modern American system, failed to cover all possible contingencies of dispute. How far an artist is justified in exceeding the estimates agreed upon at the outset of his labors is a question still as frequently discussed as it was in the time of Augustus. Clients still protest that they are robbed when they have to spend more than they anticipated ; and doubtless artists then claimed, as they do to-day, that they

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may be so hampered as to destroy the artistic value of their work if a rigorous adherence to the first bargain is enforced.

It is, of course, difficult to say upon which side the blame more often rests. There are certainly artists in this time and land who lack conscience of any kind and "commit depredations" upon the pockets of their clients without the excuse of giving them a superior piece of work in return for its extra cost. There are others who, while their artistic conscience is highly developed, have little pecuniary conscience: they honestly desire to give their client work of the highest quality, but they fail to remember that they are likewise bound to respect his pocket, and, if needful, to show him that he cannot have the best for the price he is willing to pay.

On the other hand, clients too often insist on having the best without regard to cost, and afterward grumble about the cost; or, a price once settled upon, they alter their demands without sufficiently considering that this may mean unavoidable increase in price. The task of a designer,

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whether his problem be to build a house or to lay out a park or garden, is very complicated, involving outlays, not only for actual construction, but for preparatory study, superintendence, and the office-work of subordinates, which are rarely taken into account by the client, who thinks he has only to pay for stone and brick, soil and trees, and their actual manipulation. Every change from the plan first settled upon brings a new necessity for such outlays, even if it does not make needful the undoing of work already accomplished, or the adoption of a scheme intrinsically more costly. "He keeps absolutely within his estimates if you do not change your mind," I heard a client say of a well-known architect not long ago, "but he is very extravagant if you change it." The truth was that her change of mind had meant the need for renewed study on the architect's part as well as more expensive features in the house. "The only way to keep within the sum you have named," replied one of her hearers, "is to go abroad as soon as the

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contract is signed, and not come back until the house is finished." The cause of many unfortunate disputes was certainly implied in this bit of advice.

While there is reason, then, for insisting that the artist should be more conscientious as to expenditure, the client ought also to reform his habits. There are a few rules which should be heeded by every person about to build or to lay out a country place: Take plenty of time to decide, in consultation with the artist, just what it is you want. See that he understands you clearly, leaving no question of importance open for hasty deciding as the work progresses. Then think no more about it, except to watch, if you will, lest through misunderstanding or carelessness something not in the bond is being done. Or, if you must change your mind, ascertain what the act will cost you, and decide before it is too late whether you will assume the additional expense or not. Do not think that "a few little alterations" will be of no consequence. Probably those which seem little to you will not be little from the artist's point of view, or in a

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pecuniary sense. If, however, you cannot decide upon what you want, hand over your house or your grounds to a reputable artist, name the sum you are willing to spend, and let him manage as he sees best—in which case you must not interfere at a later stage. And, finally, if you refuse to follow either of these modes of procedure, but give vague directions in the beginning, or recklessly change your mind from time to time, or interfere when you have granted the artist a free hand, do not grumble at the sum you may eventually have to pay.

Indeterminate orders and loose bargains never result well as regards either product or price, and it is the client's own fault if they are made. If the orders are clear, and the bargain hard and fast, and if then you are asked for any important increase in price, the law will protect you as it would in a bargain of another sort. But it is instructive to remember that, in almost every case where client and architect have recently come into our courts, it is the architect whose claim has been sustained. When dealing with an artist, many men, honorable

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and fair in other business matters, seem to think that they have a right to get something for nothing, or more for a given price than was promised them. This proves that as yet we do not value art as we do other commodities, or realize that the work of a man's brain has a definite marketable worth. If we estimated art as it deserves—high above any merely commercial product—we should, indeed, even feel willing to pay more for what we get than was at first decided. No artist, be he ever so conscientious, can at the outset tell to a dollar what a large and complicated piece of work will cost; and if we deprive him of the right to a reasonable margin of excess, we may fatally injure his work and thus commit a crime against him and against the art he serves.

Few clients to-day would welcome a law bidding them stand ready to add one-fourth to the prices named in their contracts; a very much smaller increase almost always gives rise to angry protestations. On the other hand, if our architects and landscape-gardeners were asked to fix a legal margin for increase of cost, they would probably be

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content with less than twenty-five per cent. ; often though they may exceed their estimates, it is rarely to the amount of fifty per cent., unless the client himself is very seriously at fault. Vitruvius thought twenty-five per cent. strict measure for the architect. Modern communities would regard it as hard measure for the client. And so may we not feel that nineteen centuries have improved the architect more than the client, and that it especially behooves the latter to look to his own heart ?

If you are not a client but a working amateur, then you can plan and begin, reconsider and change, pay and pay again, with no one but yourself to blame. But you should still cultivate your artistic conscience. You should try to plan so carefully that you will not need to change, and so well that you will never grudge the cost.

The wise Goethe tells you how not to work in one passage of that charming account of a landscape-gardening enterprise which occurs in his "Elective Affinities." As a rule, he says, the amateur cares more

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about doing something than about the thing that is to be done. "Having a preference for some particular spot, he experiments with Nature. He does not dare to remove this detrimental feature or that—he is not bold enough to sacrifice anything. He cannot picture to himself in advance what his result should be. He makes an attempt, and he succeeds or fails. Then he alters—alters, perhaps, what ought to remain, and leaves what ought to be altered. And thus at the last his work always seems a fragmentary thing—pleasing and suggestive, but never satisfying."

Certainly it can never be satisfying; and almost always it will be pleasing only to an uncultivated eye, and suggestive only of a beauty which might have been.

"Two qualities," says André, "usually distinguish professional from amateur productions—simplicity and breadth of treatment." Remember this, and you will have a steady guide-post, warning you away from the pitfalls into which you are most likely to step. If your garden has not simplicity and breadth of effect, it is certain to be bad as a

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work of art. But if it has both, it is pretty sure to be good ; for breadth means unity, as simplicity means harmony, of effect. Unity, harmony, and variety are the three essential qualities ; and Nature may be relied upon to give you variety enough, no matter how broadly and simply you do your own part of the work.

APPENDIX

Books on Gardening Art

“They set great store by their gardens. . . .
Their studie and deligence herein commeth not onely
of pleasure, but also of a certain strife and conten-
tion . . . concerning the trimming, husband-
ing, and furnishing of their gardens; everye man
or his owne parte.”

—*Sir Thomas More.*

BOOKS ON GARDENING ART



NO complete bibliography of books relating to the art of landscape-gardening existed in our language, or, I think, in any other, until one was compiled, three years ago, by Henry Sargent Codman, the young landscape-gardener who died last winter, and whose monument is the work he did, under Mr. Olmsted's direction, on the Fair-grounds at Chicago. This list is a long one, covering all the books in English, French, German, and Italian of which Mr. Codman could learn in American and foreign libraries, and which are of later date than Bacon's famous essay. During the last two centuries few books about formal gardening have been written; and the earlier literature of this branch of the art must be sought chiefly in works upon architecture, the connection between the two crafts being, of course, very close before the development of naturalistic

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methods, and the architect's training being rightly thought incomplete without some knowledge of gardening design.

Mr. Codman's list was published in Vol. III. (1890) of *Garden and Forest*, and from it I have selected the names of such books and essays, among those of greatest value to the general reader, as are most likely to be within his reach. As a supplement to this little borrowed catalogue I have added the names of a few interesting books which Mr. Codman did not mention, either because they are of later date than his list, or because they did not fall quite within its scope.

The dates prefixed to the titles of the books were given by Mr. Codman as those of the first editions. Where I have affixed an "Etc.," it implies that other works by the same author, published in other years, are also valuable. I have marked as "American" a few works written by our own authors which in their titles do not indicate this fact.

Pliny's delightful descriptions of Roman gardens, Bacon's, Pope's, and Addison's

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essays, ought to be on the shelf of everyone who loves either good gardens or good literature. Temple, Walpole, Whately, the elder Gilpin, Price, and Repton are English authors indispensable to the American amateur of gardening or friend of Nature. Downing, the father of American landscape-gardening, should of course be especially honored; and in addition to those books of his which occur in the following list, I can recommend, as filled with interesting and instructive reading, the bound volumes of the *Horticulturalist*, a magazine which he conducted for seven years, and which, when his untimely death in 1852 meant its death also, had no worthy American successor until *Garden and Forest* was established. Downing's ideas upon rural architecture are not always to be commended, but no wiser or pleasanter pen than his has written about the art of landscape-gardening.

Edouard André's is, I am sure, the best modern practical treatise upon gardening art which exists in any language, and it is very interesting to the general reader as showing how an artist works, and well explaining the

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principles of catholic good taste. Jäger's is, perhaps, the best historical work, although it hardly touches upon early periods, and is not altogether trustworthy with regard to later ones. In the pages of *Garden and Forest* (Vols. II. and III., 1889 and 1890) I tried myself to sketch an outline of the history of the art of gardening, and covered, as best I could, the earlier periods, about which little (indeed I may say nothing of a detailed and systematic sort) had been written. For later times the materials are much more abundant, but the day has not yet come when I could carry on my little survey so as to cover them also.

As to books which inculcate a loving observation of natural beauty, I must cite again those of Thoreau especially, and of Jefferies and Burroughs; refer to Wordsworth and to Emerson; note Sir John Lubbock's "Beauties of Nature" and Professor Shaler's "Aspects of the Earth;" and add the names of Charles C. Abbott, William Hamilton Gibson, Bradford Torrey, Hamilton Wright Mabie, and Wilson Flagg—all American writers of to-day. Valuable help toward

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making acquaintance with our trees may be found in George B. Emerson's "Trees and Shrubs of Massachusetts," Apgar's "Trees of the Northern United States," and Charles S. Newhall's "Trees of Northeastern America," as well as in Professor Charles Sprague Sargent's monumental "Silva of North America," four of the twelve volumes of which have now been published.

1625. FRANCIS BACON: "Of Gardens."
(Essays.)

1689. SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE: "On the Gardens of Epicurus; or, of Gardening in the year 1685."

1713. ALEXANDER POPE: "An Essay on Verdant Sculpture." (*The Guardian*, No. 173.) Etc.

1714. JOSEPH ADDISON: "Description of a Garden in the Natural Style." (*The Spectator*, No. 477.) Etc.

1728. BATTY LANGLEY: "New Principles of Gardening."

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1737. J. F. BLONDEL : "De la distribution des Maisons de Plaisance."

1753. M. A. LAUGIER : "De l'Embellissement des Jardins." ("Essai sur l'Architecture," chap. vi.)

1762. HENRY HOME (LORD KAMES) : "Gardening and Architecture." ("Elements of Criticism," Vol. II.)

1762. HORACE WALPOLE : "A History of the Modern Taste in Gardening." Etc.

1764. WILLIAM SHENSTONE : "Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening." (Collected Works, Vol. II.)

1765. JACQUES DELILLE : "Les Jardins ; ou l'Art d'embellir les Paysages."

1768. GEORGE MASON : "An Essay on Design in Gardening."

1770. THOMAS WHATELEY (OR WHEATLEY) : "Observations on Modern Gardening." (First published anonymously. The best edition is that of 1801, edited by Walpole, and including an essay "On the Different Natural Situations of Gardens" by G. J. Parkyns.)

1772. SIR WILLIAM CHAMBERS : "A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening." Etc.

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1772. WILLIAM MASON : "The English Garden." (A Poem.) Etc.

1774. CLAUDE HENRI WATELET : "Essai sur les Jardins."

1776. J. M. MOREL : "Théorie des Jardins." (First published anonymously.)

1777. RÉNÉ GERARDIN (or GIRARDIN) : "De la Composition des Paysages."

1779—1785. C. C. L. HIRSCHFELD : "Theorie der Gartenkunst."

1781. PRINCE CHARLES DE LIGNE : "Coup-d'œil sur Bel-Œil, et sur une grande partie des Jardins de l'Europe."

1785. WILLIAM MARSHALL : "Planting and Ornamental Gardening."

1786. WILLIAM GILPIN : "Observations relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty." "Remarks on Forest Scenery." Etc.

1794. SIR UVEDALE PRICE : "An Essay on the Picturesque as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful, and on the Use of Studying Pictures for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape." (The best edition is "Sir Uvedale Price on the Picturesque, with an Essay on the Origin of Taste and

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much Original Matter," edited by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, 1842.) Etc.

1793. HUMPHREY REPTON: "Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening." Etc.

1805. RICHARD PAYNE KNIGHT: "An Analytical Enquiry into the Principles of Taste." Etc.

1807. CURTEN: "Essai sur les Jardins."

1812. J. C. LOUDON: "Hints on the Formation of Gardens and Pleasure Grounds." Etc.

1819. GABRIEL THOUIN: "Plans raisonnés de toutes les Espèces de Jardins."

1825. RICHARD MORRIS: "Essays on Landscape Gardening and on uniting Picturesque Effect with Rural Scenery."

1825. F. L. VON SCKELL: "Beiträge zur bildenden Gartenkunst."

1827. SIR HENRY STEUART: "The Planter's Guide."

1828. SIR WALTER SCOTT: "On Ornamental Plantations and Landscape Gardening." (*The Quarterly Review*, Vol. XXXVII.)

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1832. WILLIAM S. GILPIN: "Practical Hints upon Landscape Gardening."

1834. FÜRST HERMANN VON PÜCKLER-MUSKAU: "Andeutungen über Landschafts Gärtnerei."

1835. JOHN DENNIS: "The Landscape Gardener, comprising the History and Principles of Tasteful Horticulture."

1835. N. VERGNAUD: "L'Art de créer les Jardins."

1841. A. J. DOWNING: "A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, adapted to North America." (The best edition is the one edited, with supplements, by H. W. Sargent, 1875.) "Rural Essays." Etc.

1850. EDWARD KEMP: "How to Lay out a Small Garden."

1852. JOSHUA MAJOR: "The Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening."

1852. C. H. J. SMITH: "Parks and Pleasure Grounds; or, Practical Notes on Country Residences, Villas, Public Parks and Gardens." (American edition, enlarged by Lewis F. Allen, 1853.)

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1855—1863. LE COMTE DE CHOULOT :
“L’Art des Jardins.”

1858. FREDERICK LAW OLMTED and
CALVERT VAUX : “Description of a Plan
for the Improvement of Central Park.” Etc.

1859. R. M. COPELAND : “Country
Life ; a Hand-book of Agriculture, Horti-
culture, and Landscape Gardening.” (Ameri-
can.)

1859. CHARLES FOLLEN : “Suggestions
on Landscape Gardening.” (American.)

1861. R. SIEBECK : “Die bildende Gar-
tenkunst in ihren modernen Formen.”
(English translation, “Picturesque Garden
Plans,” by Joseph Newton, 1864 ; and an-
other, “The Landscape Gardener,” 1876.)

1862. G. MEYER : “Lehrbuch der schö-
nen Gartenkunst.”

1862. E. PETZOLD : “Die Landschafts
Gärtnerei.”

1864. L. VITET : “De la théorie des
Jardins.” (“Études sur l’Histoire de
l’Art,” Vol. IV.)

1867. CHARLES BLANC : “Les Jardins.”
(“Grammaire des Arts du Dessin,” Book
I., Chap. xxvi.)

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1868. A. ALPHAND : " Les Promenades de Paris : Étude sur l'Art des Jardins."

1869. WILLIAM ROBINSON : " The Parks, Promenades, and Gardens of Paris."

1870. F. J. SCOTT : " The Art of Beautifying Suburban Home-Grounds of Small Extent." (Second edition, called " Beautiful Homes.") (American.)

1873. H. W. S. CLEVELAND : " Landscape Architecture as Applied to the Wants of the West." Etc. (American.)

1873. WILLIAM HAMMOND HALL : " The Influence of Parks and Pleasure Grounds." (Report of the Engineer of the Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.)

1877. H. JAEGER : Lehrbuch der Gartenkunst." 1885. " Gartenkunst und Gärten Sonst und Jetzt."

1879. EDOUARD ANDRÉ : L'Art des Jardins." Etc.

1881. FREDERICK LAW OLNSTED : " A Consideration of the Justifying Value of a Public Park." Etc. (American.)

1882. K. E. SCHNEIDER : " Die schöne Gartenkunst."

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1883. WILLIAM ROBINSON: "The English Flower Garden." Etc.

1884. W. P. TUCKERMANN: "Die Gartenkunst der Italienischen Renaissance-Zeit."

1885. JACOB VON FALKE: "Der Garten, seine Kunst und Kunstgeschichte."

1886. J. CONDER: "The Art of Landscape Gardening in Japan." (*Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, xiv.)

1890. WALTER HOWE: "The Garden as Considered in Literature by Certain Polite Writers; with a Critical Introduction." (American.)

1884. E. V. B. (MRS. BOYLE.) "Days and Hours in a Garden."

1885. ALBERT F. SIEVEKING: "The Praise of Gardens."

1887. W. CAREW HAZLITT: "Gleanings in Old Garden Literature."

1889. GEORGE H. ELLWANGER: "The Garden's Story." (American.)

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1890. H. E. MILNER : "The Art and Practice of Landscape Gardening."

1891. SAMUEL PARSONS, JR. : "Landscape Gardening." (American.)

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